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BÉLED-ES-SIBA

*SKETCHES AND ESSAYS
OF TRAVEL AND HISTORY*

BY

W. E. D. ALLEN

WITH A FOREWORD BY

MAJOR-GENERAL LORD EDWARD GLEICHEN

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FOREWORD

THE intrinsic value of this “conglomerate of travellings”—as the author picturesquely terms them—lies in the appeal they make to every would-be wanderer who, like Mr. Allen, is sick unto death of the well-trodden roads of the ordinary tourist. Not for him are the gorgeous hotels and motor-cars of the Riviera, Normandy or Madrid, nor the picture-galleries of Italy. He is away into countries beyond, fairly easy of access yet uncommon of aspect, and presenting problems of race and country undreamed of by the ordinary “traveller.” The Caucasus—on which he is an expert—how many of us have been there?—a journey along the northern slopes of the Atlas, from Agadir and Tarudant to Meknès—in a car, it is true, but an unfrequented and all but unknown track as journeys go; through Central Europe: Hungary, the Banat, Croatia; and so back to Ulster for a Derry celebration.

A vivid presentment in coloured wording, bringing back, at all events to the writer of this foreword, the memory of similar scenes in the same countries. Informative also : for who knows anything about the Turko-Serbian War of 1876 or the economic results to Hungary of the Treaty of the Trianon? To finish up with, some appreciative words on that lovable Quixotic sportsman, Aubrey Herbert.

A mixture, it is true : but a mixture to be taken when things are looking dull and drab, when one is striving to get away—at all events for an hour or two—from the depressing everydayness of life in a dingy city.

EDWARD GLEICHEN.

London,
November 1924.

PREFACE

To heave out on to the intelligent world a book conglomerate of travellings and some few miscellanies of history is presumptuous, futile almost to insanity. All this because the book has not what justifies impertinence—the cherished chance of considerable profit or gracious celebration. Few people, you understand, will pay their shillings to see, randomly, the market day of Temesvar, the bored and sodden *Légionnaires* in Caspa Tadla, the Orangemen of Omagh, like old Covenanters, meeting in the rain. Less than any, I well know, would track the Turks through Serbia fifty years ago, or mouth silently the names of lost Caucasian tribes.

So be it. I throw out this book to be noticed little, obviously, and shortly to pass into its oblivion. I have made it for my own pleasure. These things of undistinguished travel I wrote when I had finished travelling, to delight my recollection. Those

two old wars I worked upon as at a game of chess, having a background of strange countries—to pass the time. The glowing sadness of “the Meskhian bard” seemed meet to be abstracted for the sake of some who might not know to seek him.

The book is paltry, patently, for in the reading of great books you clamber down to the smallness of your own endeavour. And there are books for which I should be proud that the proofs of mine might be scissored up to make the packing. So here is this book, the labourings and selfish entertainment of one who may well be a Square Peg in the Round Hole of this Modern Life. To some few other Square Pegs it will give an hour or two of pleasure, interest, disappointment. I misdoubt if round and smooth, well-polished, neatly-fitting Pegs read past the Contents Page.

London,
February 1925.

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The papers included in "Incidental Ways" originally appeared in the *Morning Post*; "Old Places of the Southern Slavs," in the *Near East*; the three geographical papers, with maps, in the *Army Quarterly*; "The Mountain of Languages" and "The Man in the Panther's Skin" in the *Asiatic Review*. To the Editors of these publications I am indebted for courteous permission to reprint.

BÉLED-ES-SIBA ¹

I

OF those arts which are withering under the commonplace stare of civilisation, principal is the art of travel. The day is not distant when the cinema alone will perpetuate the memory of the gorilla and the white hippopotamus—victims of motor-bandits from transatlantic museums—and a Marx-weaned generation will titillate their tabloid suppers with the muezzin's call, sandwiched between the Savoy Savannah and Uncle Caractacus' Chat.

The art of travel, like all great art, is individual, hard and secret, a thing of pain and love. And in the decline of the literature

¹ In Morocco *Béled-es-Siba* signifies the free or independent country, the mountainous districts, in contrast to *Béled-el-Makhzen*, "the government country," the flat country which has always, in practice, remained under the effective control of the administration, Moorish or European.

of travel, we can see that ease has slaughtered inspiration, that travel has become a pastime or a science, but that the art is dying, dead. A covey of professors alights upon some islands for one whole day, and produces a tome; fashionable ladies and dilettante mongers of Oriental mystery delight those who would proceed from the "Garden of Allah" to something more informative: but "Eöthen" was not inspired on the blue plush of a wagon-lit; Doughty had no Ford; and Nostromo would never have swaggered along the quays of Sulaco—that most real of South American cities—if Conrad had spent his life in conducting Midland manufacturers "a thousand miles up the Amazon."

Morocco, like all where else, has felt the starch-cuffed hand of progress. Gone are the hale and bloody days of El-Hassan and Abdul-Aziz, when Kaid Maclean was strong in the land, and adventurers, admonished in both Houses, hovered down the Sûsi coast in the good ship "Tourmaline." The Compagnie Transatlantique has run up palatial hotels in Casablanca—where sixteen years ago the rude Zaiane rode in to pull up the first kilometre laid of railway-line and wreck

the Consulates; in Fez—under the very mountain, where less years ago the Berber hordes charged down to Paradise under Lyautey's mitrailleuses; and in Marrakesh—where later El-Hiba, skinny marabout from the wilderness beyond the Dra'a, gathered his "blue men" to fight with Mangin.

Broad motor-roads bisect and intersect the country from Casablanca, through the ambulatory sultans' three ancient capitals of Rabat—lair of republican corsairs in the past; Meknès—town of lovely gates that watches the most truculent parts of the Middle Atlas; and Fez—learned, luxurious and effete; down the Atlantic side to Mogador—where is the best fishing on the Moorish coast; and to Marrakesh—capital of the south, metropolis of the desert tribes, and market of the mountain Shluh, where till twelve years ago the rich, rough *Kaids* and the fastidious gentlemen of Fez did still send their chamberlains to inspect, in the "Meeting-place of the Dead," luscious negresses from Guinea, meet to be domesticated, slim, brown-skinned, black-eyed Berber girls out of the snowy mountain, and small, lithe, laughing dancing-boys from Sûs. Limousines now sweep along

these roads, cushioned within the clients of the Cie Transatlantique, destined to spend three days in Fez, not omitting Volubilis (excursion $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours): while thundering behind, those democratic chars-à-bancs, holding two or three plump *Colons'* wives; a Jew or so, now safe from violence under the tolerant initials of R.F., but not yet ridded of the condemnatory gaberdine; some fat and greasy Tangerines, who may have learnt to trade in matches, boots, or typewriters; and a sturdy corporal of Tirailleurs.

Thus I, idly and in the disconsolate manner of one who passes through a land, knowing neither the history nor the people nor the language — pipe-chewing continuously, and handling "Guide Bleu" unintelligently, did find my way from hotel to hotel by char-à-banc to the "huge and mightie citie" of Marrakesh. Of this city I will say little, for has it not been described most comprehensively and detailedly in guides, rhapsodised by Pierre Loti, and brought to paper so many score "impressions." Like some mirage of wonder, Marrakesh comes upon you wedged in the front seat of your char-à-banc, between a massive powdered Marseillaise and a brawny,

streaming chauffeur. Coming over the bare hills of Jebilet in the hot evening—a forest of palms lies beneath, showing here and there the walls and squat towers of tawny mud and the slender grace of the Kûtûbiya, and behind, vague and faint like delicate lace against the blue, the snowy peaks of Atlas. Driving through the palm-groves you hardly see the town until you are in the Djema'a 'el Fna—the afore-mentioned “Meeting-place of the Dead,” where the Kûtûbiya towers almost above you; the *guides* and *cireurs* are fighting for your baggage; the plate-glass of the French shops is flashing in the dusty sunlight; and to one side, over the stretch of Djema'a 'el Fna, a mass of booths and tents of skin, ragged crowds in white and blue and striped *jelabas*, dun mules piled high with lush green reed, women veiled and swathed in white, portly *Kaids* ridden in on black or cream-coloured pacing-mules — caparisoned in red, Sûsi dancing boys with jingling music, fire-eaters and acrobats from Tazerwalt, men with serpents from the Admin woods, negro comedians, cadaverous ragged preachers, and naked little *gamins* stamping bare-footed upon glass.

Fortune was kind to me, two nights later, while I was sitting in the Café de France, sipping a vermouth cassis and enduring the eternal *cirage*—staring vaguely at the crowd of wondering *indigènes* who were watching through the plate-glass behind the local white society jazz.

I had seen him before, a dapper little man in smart khaki ducks, bearded and weather-beaten, with kindly, satirical, twinkling eyes—a sort of elderly Captain Kettle, and I knew him to be about the last of the old generation in Morocco, a man who had dipped deep into politics in the fiery days, and who had rivalled Rohlfs and Lenz and de Foucault in solitary desperate expeditions, native-wise, over the Atlas and into the Sahara. He began to talk, for I found afterwards he was always tolerant of tourists, and with the vapidty of that species, I supposed I had seen most there was to see in Morocco—Tangier, Ceuta, Tetuan, Fez, Meknès, and here I was in Marrakesh. I could not make up my mind whether to try to pick up at Casablanca some steamer going down to Dakar, or otherwise to follow the chars-à-bancs into Algeria. Then I heard about the Berbers, and that lazy inspiration

I had had to see those faint mountains that shimmer vaguely back of Marrakesh was turned to an itching hunger. I do not think I am alone in mixing Berbers up with Arabs, or in imagining that Rifi and Sûsi were Arab tribes; in fact I always considered it rather intelligent to know that Kurds and Copts were not Semitic. Here then was one of those blood-tingling discoveries which come to rouse and cheer the ignorant and lazy when they roam—whole new worlds of history and geography to be entered avidly, such as when one first lighted on the Georgians, or wondered about Yucatan. An ancient race, I learnt, the Berbers, fit problem for ethnological and archæological and other professorial persons—stretching from the valley of the Nile, and having kin among some tribes of Abyssinia, spreading over all the deserts of North Africa, along the mountain ranges of the Mediterranean littoral, southwest over all the Atlas, and far south into the Sahara, bordering to the Guinea regions. Some German of erudition has argued their kinship with the Basques, and more definitely they are linked through the Copts with the ancient race of Egypt. The influence of

Carthage on the Berbers was profound : along the Mediterranean the two peoples were in constant contact, and some, reading into the *Periplus of Hanno*—when Carthaginian settlements were founded all down the Moorish coast certainly as far south as Agadir and the Wady Sûs—see the work and influence of Carthage in the mysterious ruins that are scattered over the country between the Atlas and the Wady Dra'a, and in the peculiar architecture, arts and customs of the Southern Berber tribes.

Neither Rome nor the Arabs held much more of Morocco than the French hold to-day, that is, all the flat and open country. The Arabs came indeed, and took a stronger grip than Rome, so that the Berbers fitted Islam into their old Paganism, and have now much of the Arab talk and ways. But although the Berbers formed the shaft to the Arab spear-head into Spain, and later sent dynasties of soldiers and prophets to command the Faithful of Fez and Marrakesh, they have remained a race apart, not Arab-speaking, and only on the fringe of Islam. The later Moorish Sultans, Berbers sometimes themselves, made many expeditions over the mountains

and into the desert to reduce the unregenerate tribes, marauders of the caravans and spoilers of the towns; but when the Berbers did not hurl down rocks and attack in passes, they betook themselves to the mountain-tops or into the wilderness, and the next dynastic war in the rich *béled* brought them looting back to the gates of the four Sherifian capitals.

The Berbers of Morocco may be divided into four groups, speaking the same Shluh language, but in dialects so varied that, for instance, a Rifi can understand no word a Drawi says. The proper Shluh is that of the tribes of the Middle Atlas, Ghiatha, Ait Yussi, Beni M'Gild, Zaiane and others—of the two latter more again—those, in fact, inhabiting the mountains, from S.E. of Fez, to about due S. of Marrakesh; the second group are the twelve notorious tribes of the Rif, most pestilential to the Spaniards, and situate along the littoral of the Mediterranean, from Tetuan to near Oran; the third, the Sûsi tribes, on the southern side of the Atlas, and along the Wady Sûs; the fourth, the tribes inhabiting the wilderness north and south of the Wady Dra'a. The Spaniards, since the disintegration of the old Moroccan

Empire, fifteen years ago, have pursued the same methods as the former Sultans ; that is, they have attempted to subdue the Rif by the use of strong punitive columns—with disastrous results, productive of the fame of Abdul Krim. The French, better learned by the Kabyle wars, have adopted a policy of pacification—bribing and sustaining the four great *Kaids* of the Southern Atlas, Glawi, Gûndafi, M'tûgi and Ghellûli ; and subduing the less organised tribes of the Middle Atlas with a system of block-houses, linked and supported by small mobile columns. They have thus produced that state which is ideal for travel, that is, practical order, enlivened by occasional disorder, so that any globe-trotter can go thereabouts without the need of language or disguise—which are only the pleasures of him who makes an art of travel—but with that pleasant “thousandth chance” which is to be had, say, hunting in England. “But how many of them go?” grinned my kind instructor.

I saw him only once again, standing easily in a circle of *indigènes* who were round two story-tellers, and he corrected one of them who had made an error in the recital of the

names of saints and where they were born. "He is indeed a Muslim," marvelled a Berber, standing by, "although he wears a hat." And I left him in the torch-light, with the ragged, shaven-headed, laughing men all round, this little spare, elderly man, of the mad Englishmen, that, before money-getting, love the chirrup of crickets in the night, and the creak of leather and the smell of camels' dung.

II

THE peaceful control of the French in Southern Morocco is limited by the foothills of the Atlas, twenty to thirty miles south of Marrakesh. In the mountains they rule by the hand of Glawi and Gûndafi, and south, in the Wady Sûs, they maintain the sagacious and amiable Pasha of Tarudant. There is a *piste muletière* over the highest part of the Great Atlas, from Amismis—an Arcadian barony of el-Gûndafi situate where the Wady N'fis leaves the mountains for the sandy plains—past the stronghold of Gûndafa, down to Aûlûz, in the upper reaches of the Wady Sûs; but Kaid el-Gûndafi, who is not in favour altogether with his masters, glowers

upon the passage of foreigners that way. Thirty miles to the west another *piste*, more frequented, enters the mountains at the Senegalese fort of Imi-n-tanût, and runs through forty miles of doubtful hill-country to another fort at Bigûdin, which is dependent on the larger French post at Tarudant, whither you come down through the Pass of Bibawan. This second track is used by the columns going from Marrakesh to Tarudant and the Sûs, and, although officially impassable, is accessible to a cheap and hardy car. From Mogador on the Atlantic coast, two other *pistes* run to Agadir through the dissident country of the obstreperous Haha clans, and the domains of the wary and peaceably inclined M'tûgi.

My plan was to go down to Agadir by the passable inland *piste* from Mogador, and to try to take a car back over the Bibawan to Imi-n-tanût. I was lucky in engaging the goodwill of the genial officials of the Bureau des Renseignements at Marrakesh, and further in securing the services of a staff chauffeur, who for this journey was given six days' leave. He was a young Tunisian Italian, of the fine type of new Latin now risen in this

industrial age, to writhe all day in engines, and fly to the ends of the earth, and to make Fascismo. Small, lithe and wiry, olive-skinned, sharp-featured, with big intelligent eyes; well-informed and cynical, keen, quick, individual; an expert in wireless and the jazz; devoted, it appeared, to his mother and many women younger; a watcher of *valuta*; smoker of fifty cigarettes each day; ex-airman, champion cyclist of Morocco—such is Roberto Ronchi, in dapper khaki ducks smeared black, and smart blue *béret basque*. With him, for company, Jean, his brother-in-law, good-natured, olive-skinned, ragged moustache and growing plump, a poorish chauffeur, who gasps and chuckles nervously at sharp turns in the mountains. And for guide, Muhammad, an Arab boy of the *cireur* breed, out of the garage. He speaks some Shluh, and his brother is assistant chauffeur in the garages of S.E. the Pasha of Tarudant. And so one evening in late April, all being well-ordered, the four of us packed uncomfortably with luggage into a small Citroën, sped out of Marrakesh, through the palm-hidden suburbs of Guéliz, and by the Bab Dukhala, into the red sandy country, already growing cool, and

took the long straight road to Mogador. A dull road it is, over a flat plain, with here and there the small scorched humps of single hills, and now and again a low-set village of red mud walls—the black and contemplative figure of the sacred stork, most likely the only sign of life, perched in a big untidy nest upon the top of some squat crumbling tower.

At Sheshawa, a forlorn collection of European sheds and native huts, beside three low humped hills, where the road runs south to Imi-n-tanût, we stopped for coffee. There is a Frenchman living here, lonely, satirical, rising sixty, who talks bitterly of thirty years in Northern Africa, and it is eighteen months even since he has been in Marrakesh. The inevitable pabulum of Frenchmen's conversation is broached. No white woman would live here. But do not many like the *indigènes*? Why not? A scornful laugh. He is a fool, this tourist. What are they, "Des — ! J'en ai eu cinq cents." Try them. Give them everything. Go away for six hours to Imi-n-tanût,—“et elle se fait fixer par un nègre.” Alceste is his only friend. And Alceste licks his hand—one of those lean, mangy, pink and yellow curs, a little of the

lurcher breed, there are about these parts. Yes, his only happiness is when Alceste and he go hunting partridges.

It was getting cold, with a wind blowing over from the Atlantic, when we resumed the road to Mogador, and it was dark before we came to the scrubby argan-forest, which extends some miles on the landward side of the town. We went in through the white walls in the darkness, and, garaging our car, strolled into a cinema, full of crapulous old Jews, and dirty little sweet-sucking Arab boys, who were attentively watching a dramatisation of the sober lives of the British aristocracy, in which, if I remember rightly, an evil member of the Upper House, whose name was Viscount James Clandigway, murdered the Hon. Sir Erskine at a *bal masqué* in Hyde Park.

Mogador, in the morning, appeared most fresh and cool—with the breezes from the Atlantic blowing in—after the dry and sweltering heat of Marrakesh. But it is a town with less charm than any in Morocco—for it is not at all Moorish, nor yet quite French like Casablanca, but seems a kind of hybrid place. It was built indeed in the

eighteenth century by a French architect for the Sultan Sidi Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, who wished by making a new port to avoid the effect of concessions he had made in other ports to the Royal Danish Company. Opposite is the "Island Mogadore," where Drake spent his first Christmas aboard the "Golden Hind"; and further down a little Portuguese fort, on a rock in the middle of wide sands, of the days when the Portuguese seamen, descendants themselves mostly of Vikings, it may be held, played Viking on the Moorish coast and raided all the way down from Larache to Agadir, and inward, almost up to the palm-forests of Marrakesh.

"Strange town, all glittering, treeless, white,
Begirt with sand and seething spray,"

Mogador stands, terminus of French motor-roads, facing the sea-routes of the world, curiously drab and cheap and commonplace, right upon the edge of the most unknown and savage tracks of country in all Africa.

Lemprière, who visited the town when it was still new, notes that on the land side "batteries are so placed as to prevent any incursion from the Southern Arabs, who are

of a turbulent disposition, and who, from the great wealth which is known to be always in Mogadore, would gladly avail themselves of any opportunity that offered to pillage the town." And it is less than fifteen years since a young and stalwart chief of the Haha clans, south of the town, by name Anflus, gathered his ragged men, and came upon the Jews of Mogador, to demand a ransom—which he alleged, not without justice, to represent part of the profits which the Jews had made in trade out of the surrounding tribesmen—and, further, with mediæval licentiousness, the surrender of one thousand maidens. A curious picture these brown, half-naked, shaven-headed, grinning savages with their spears and long *jezails*, in the narrow, high, white streets of Mogador, and the sons of Israel, running, gibbering, tripping in their long black gaberdines—fearful for the shekels, which are many, and the maidens—not so many, as he may see who keeps the early hours in the dark streets of the Mellah—fearful for the shekels and the maidens of the Mellah of Mogador. Temporisation of the Hebrews was not to the liking of the violent Anflus and his wild Haha, and when

the ransom was not forthcoming, the Haha swarmed into the Mellah and took their fill of gold and innocence. Esau risen upon his brother Jacob. But be it said that the abominable Anflus and many of the Haha later dropped before French mitrailleuses, and, further, now to the Haha villages has spread an illness of the towns, which, originally, the Jews, being driven out of Spain, brought with them when they were received as refugees among the Moors.

III

It happened that about the year 1520, the Genoese took off the Isle of Jerbé a Turkish ship, in which was travelling from Cairo to Algiers an erudite and knowledgeable young Moor, of a worthy family of Fez, by name El-Hassan Ibn Muhammad el-Wezaz. Being brought to Rome, he so delighted society there by his learning and knowledge of the world that he was set at liberty, and being of a facile philosophy, was baptised under the name of Giovanni Leone; for his godfather, none less than His Holiness Pope Leo X, of the House of Medici. Whereupon

Leo, surnamed Africanus, settled down to the easy and cultured life of the Roman Court, and to the compilation of his "History and Description of Africa," which was to remain the most authoritative source of information on many parts of that continent for close upon three hundred and fifty years.

Of all Africa there was no region which Leo knew better than the unknown Haha country, "the province of Hea," where he spent two years or more as the secretary to a Sherif who appears to have been employed as a kind of itinerant judge. And no man to this day, neither the English renegade sailor, Pellow, who in the eighteenth century served the Sultan in these parts, and later as a fugitive earned a livelihood trapping ducks near Agadir, nor the explorers Erckmann and de Foucauld, saw half the countryside where Leo wandered. Further, Leo happened to visit Haha a few years before the fierce wars between the Moors and Portuguese utterly destroyed its growing towns and turned it into the wilderness it is to-day.

One remarkable characteristic of North African historical geography is the rapid growth and decay of towns and cities. All

the prosperous towns which Leo knew in Haha and the Sûs have, with the exception of Tarudant, disappeared, nor generally are even their names remembered. And since his time Mogador has arisen to a considerable place. Tarudant and Agadir, small places then, have grown and crumbled, and far south the new town of Tiznit has appeared. The phenomenon can be explained, for the wars of North Africa are ruthless, and when the conqueror takes a resisting town, the walls are levelled and the population deported into slavery, their places being filled by peoples deported from some other invaded district, who are probably constrained to settle in some spot more easily controllable by their master.

Therefore, speeding quickly through the thick argan scrub of Haha over the *piste* which runs beside the new motor-road, that French officers with gangs of Haha workmen and Senegalese guards are building, past the great ruddy-walled stronghold of Gellûli, and his many keeps along the hill-tops, round the bare, scorching flank of Cap Ghir along the way to Agadir; speeding thus quickly, we will leave the prosaic Citroën outside the

broken-down café on the beach at Agadir, where the *Légionnaires*, flies thick on their necks and faces, are sipping brandies in the noonday heat; and leave our prosaic selves—staring at the bay where the “Panther” came—to follow the learned Leo among the forgotten and utterly lost cities of Haha, a year or five years before they were destroyed.

“This region of Hea,” says Leo, “is an vneeven and roughe soile, full of rockie mountaines, shadie woods and chrystall streames in all places; being wonderfully rich and wel stored with inhabitants. They have in the said region great abundance of goates and asses, but not such plentie of sheepe, oxen and horses . . . but those (horses) are so nimble and full of metall, that they will climb like cats over the steepe and craggie mountaines. . . . You shall find here great store of deere, of wilde goates and of hares: Howbeit the people are no whit delighted in hunting. Which is the cause (as I thinke) why the said beasts do so multiply.”

Remarking that “the cities of Hea are few in number, though they have great store of villages, townes and most strong castles,” Leo proceeds to describe first “the ancient citie of Tednest . . . built by the Africans

upon a most beautiful and large plain, which they have invironed with a loftie wall built of bricke and lime." Tednest has been placed about twenty-five miles S.E. of the River Tansift, which flows into the Atlantic between Safi and Mogador. The city was taken and razed by the Portuguese about 1515, and, says Leo, "My selfe (I remember) sawe the citie utterly destroyed and defaced, the walls thereof being laid even with the ground, the houses being destitute of inhabitants, and nothing at that time to be there seene, but only the nests of ravens and other birds."

About eighteen miles east of Tednest stood the city of Teculeth, containing, as did Tednest, a fine mosque, "fower hospitals and a monastery of religious persons," and having, according to Leo, a population of a thousand households. "The inhabitants of this toune are farre wealthier than they of Tednest, for they have a most famous port upon the Ocean Sea, commonly called by merchants, Goz. They have likewise great abundance of corne and pulse, which grow in the fruitfull fields adjacent. These also of Teculeth send waxe into Portugall to be

solde, and they are verie curious in their apparell, and about the furniture of their houses." Teculeth, Leo adds, was captured and destroyed by the Portuguese in 1514. Goz likewise has disappeared. Eight miles south of Teculeth was a smaller town, Hadecchis—in whose market was sold "great store of catell, of butter, oyle, yron, and cloath." "Their women," Leo remarks, "are very beautifull, white of colour, fat, comely and trim. But the men beare a most savage minde, being so extremely possessed with jealousie, that whomsoever they finde but talking with their wives, they presently go about to murther them," . . . and . . . "Here I was entertained by a certain courteous and liberall minded priest, who was exceedingly delighted with Arabian Poetrie. Wherefore being so lovingly entertained I read unto him a certaine briefe treatise touching the same argument: which he accepted so kindly at my hands that he would not suffer me to depart without great and bountifull rewards."

Other towns, whose names read as if out of Marco Polo or Gulliver—Ileusugaghen, Tagtess, Igilingigil, Culeihat Elmuridin,

Tefethne—were visited by Leo, and he notes with care their situation, the characteristics, peculiarities, and occupations of their inhabitants and his own adventures there.

Near the little fortified town of Teijeut our author had an unpleasant experience with lions—beasts which are now found only very rarely in the Atlas.

“Certaine of vs, vpon time, comming into these parts, for want of a lodging were constrained to repayre vnto a little cottage which we escried, being so olde that it was in danger of falling: having provided our horses of provender, we stopped up all the doores and passages of the said cottage with thornes and wood, as circumspectly as possibly we could; these things happened in the month of Aprill, at what time they have extreme heat in the same country. Wherefore we ourselves got up to the top of the house to the end that in our sleep we might be neere unto the open ayer. About midnight we spied two monstrous lyons, who were drawn thither by the sent of our horses and endeavored to breake downe that fence of thornes which we had made. Whereupon the horses being put in feare, kept such a neighing and such a stirre, that we misdoubted least the rotten cottage should have fallen, and least ourselves should have become a prey unto the lyons.”

Tefethne was a port of some importance situate apparently about half-way between the present site of Mogador and Cap Ghir, and was the port for the southern part of the Haha, as Goz was for the northern part.

“ Here ships of meane burthen may safely harbour themselves; and hither the Portugall merchants resort to buy goatskins and waxe. . . . Neere unto this towne runs a certaine river, whereinto the ships put themselves in tempestuous weather. . . . The towne wall is built of white hewen stone and of bricke. . . . They gather their yeerely customes and subsidies, all the whole summe whereof is distributed among such citizens as are meete for the warres.”

In spite, however, of the wealth and hospitality of the inhabitants of Tefethne, Leo did not enjoy his stay there.

“ My selfe being in companie with the Seriffo or Mahumetan prelate, continued for the space of three daies among this people, which three daies seemed three yeeres unto me, both for the incredible number of fleas, and also for the most loathsome and intolerable stench of pisse and of goates’ dung. For each citizen hath a flocke of goates, which they drive in the daytime to pasture, and at night they house them at home in their owne habitations, yea, even before their chamber doores.”

IV

I WENT out from the café by the beach, where the gramophone squeaked in the heat, and the *Légionnaires*, tunics open at neck, chairs tipped back and feet on table, sat picking teeth despondently; laconic, sardonic, silent men, more utterly bored even than I remember we used to look during Morning Service in Upper Chapel.

I walked up the long street of white huts and little shops, sprawling under the great hill that gives to Agadir its surname Ighir—"the stronghold on the cliff." And I found the French Commandant in a small, cool room, looking over the wide bay and catching its pleasant breeze. He was a tall, broad, middle-aged man of the familiar type of French Colonial soldier, bronzed, growing rather bald, and with a great unclipped yellow beard. Keen, enthusiastic, an eater of work, you could see he did not share the utter desolation of the *Légionnaires*. And he probably could not have told you that both the barmaids in the café were fat and had thick ankles and that there were no other white women in the place. Agadir was

in his soul; he was laying well his few bricks to the bastions of France in his hard work in this hot, forgotten place—all love and art to him were in this empire-building.

I left him with his promise that he would telephone my arrival on to Tarudant, and about three in the afternoon we took the road again. The *piste* from Agadir to Tarudant runs due east, following the valley of the Wady Sûs, and is almost worse than that from Mogador south, and the going was not more than eighteen miles an hour. The road is, however, frequented by the cars of the Pasha of Tarudant—he is reputed to have eleven, mostly Fords—seven of which have broken down on their way to him from Mogador or Imi-n-tanût. On shallow sandy patches the *piste* is fairly easy going, but much of it is over-strewn with boulders and large stones, and thus—and especially in crossing the various dry beds of *wadis* along the route—the driver must be careful for his axles.

The way lies through an undulating country, covered with argan scrub, but of more fertile soil than the Haha. The country might be cultivated easily but for the predatory ways

of its inhabitants. It is the territory of the Hawara Berbers, clans which, in spite of the seven punitive expeditions of Sultan El-Hassan, have never owned a master, and are constantly at odds with the townsmen of Tarudant. The Hawara formed part of the army of the Mahdi El-Hiba, when, in the midst of the anarchy fifteen years ago, he swarmed over the Atlas and, after capturing Marrakesh, made a bid for the Moroccan throne.

The French indeed do not rule, though they may control, the country south of the Atlas. They have their posts, as at Agadir, Tarudant and Tiznit, and they keep open the main *pistes*, but over the countryside they govern by the hands of the local *Kaïds*, who, like Glawi and Gûndafi in the Great Atlas, are wise enough to serve the French Protectorate with the loose loyalty and interested fidelity which they accorded to any strong Sultan in the past.

An hour from Agadir we came to a point where the *piste* forks eastward to Tarudant, and northward to the Bibawan, and here there is a small post of Senegalese. Further on the country gradually became more fertile,

olives and date-palms interspersing the argan bushes. We went down through miniature cliffs into the dry bed of a *wady*, and emerging we frightened a gazelle. Here was the spot where two years ago the scoundrelly Hawara ambushed S.E. the Pasha of Tarudant in his newest Ford. The Pasha is what the French describe as *apprivoisé*—that is, he has been to Paris, he has a piano, and when he motors he affects goggles and an air-cushion. But he is still an Arab *Kaid*, son of the grand and wise old man who faithfully followed all the *harkas* of El-Hassan, and rounded up El-Hiba for the French. The Ford went on, the Hawara riding furiously alongside, firing from their saddles. The Pasha aimed carefully with a repeating rifle, which he keeps for sundry game during his afternoon drives, and two of the seven brigands fell. The others dropped back into the wilderness. Such is the proud story I had from Muhammad, the brother of the Pasha's second chauffeur.

There is over all this wilderness of Sûs a charm, almost of Arcady, born of the waning sunlight on the tawny rocks, the chirrup of a thousand birds and their flashing colour

across the pale blue sky—bright sepia fisher-birds and golden hawks, and all white, or grey and brown rose-tinted pigeons; mauve gerboas in the stony places, and quick-flitting two-foot lizards. And the villages, for all their rustic warring, have an air of utter peacefulness. Careless, unmade, the rough mud huts and round black hovels of thatch on the dry ground. Only the camels seem laborious, thin and bony, with their bitter disillusioned muzzles and their disagreeable eyes: and the little padding donkeys, with grown men astride—prodding the sore spots on their haunches. The men, tall, skinny, ragged, bold and laughing, and it is seldom that even a grey-beard scowls at the stranger, though these people have a reputation for truculent *intransigence*. The peace of the young world, of an untouched, forgotten land, seems to lie over all, and even their fierce bloody wars are childish, uncomplicated, easy to understand.

You come upon Tarudant suddenly rising out of the wilderness. Its aged, rickety walls of ruddy *tabiya*, with their stocky, low, cracked towers showing over behind the crowded date-palms within the town, seem

like the walls of some great deserted garden. Tarudant, in the evening, might be a forgotten city, uninhabited, crumbling, disintegrating gradually into the wilderness of argan scrub. Nearly four miles round go the walls of Tarudant, a dry ditch following them, the squat watch-towers set at even intervals, and five ruined gates—grand towers and mighty doors of studded cedar—still closed at night against the Hawara: the Bab-el-Kaspa leading east up the valley of the Sûs to Aûlûz, to Tamgrût, oasis of the upper Dra'a, and over the desert to Tafilelt and Tûat far beyond; el-Khamis for Kaspa Gûndafa and Marrakesh over the Great Atlas; Aûlad-ibn-Nûna, north-westwards over the Bibawan and through M'tûgi's country up to Mogador; Tergûnt, following our road to Agadir; and Ez-Zorgan going south to the marches of the Moors, to El-Hassan's fort at Tiznit, to sacred Tazerwalt and the land where the charmers take their snakes, and further far to Tindûf, where the camels come by Shingit or Arawan from Timbûktû.

Speeding along the ruddy *piste* we saw a Ford, packed with six or seven men in blue or white *jelabas*; and presently descends

therefrom a youth in spotless white *jelaba* of fine linen, and hanging at his belt of plaited white silk cord, a curved dagger, in sheath of silver very finely wrought. Ahmad, the Pasha's son—and Muhammad stoops to kiss his hem; an alert and graceful carriage and a pleasant, condescending manner, this grandson of old û Mûïs, petty sheikh of the Sektana, has the royal manner which the desert men all carry, contrast to the slow and ponderous heavy-hippedness of many a rich lord of Fez or Marrakesh, familiar as a negro, gross, sensual and greedy in their looks and eating-ways. Ahmad has the oval face, the olive skin, the big black eyes and finely chiselled features of youth in Arab tales, and indeed the house of û Mûïs proudly boast their Arab blood, which is the conqueror's blood, like Norman blood, about these parts.

We exchanged politenesses through Muhammad, the interpreter, and Ahmad goes upon his evening drive, for these Fords are the latest novelty of the Pasha's court in Tarudant.

We entered by the Bab-el-Tergûnt, past a guard of the Pasha's soldiers, who brought

their arms quite efficiently to the salute. The town within retains, again, the air of a vast neglected garden. The road, which is a series of mounds and holes and stony patches—with, in two places, shallow ponds encroaching on it—runs between ruinous walls, over which green palms are leaning everywhere, and past open places of undergrowth where mules and donkeys are making an evening meal. Presently this road or lane comes into a confusion of narrow alleys of shops of yellow earth and wooden booths, the whole passage being darkened and covered over with a roofing of reeds to keep out the hot sun of the day. Here is the Mellah and the commercial part of the town, and the narrow alleyways are swarming with people, who give way with merry laughs and shouting before the car. The people are mostly Berbers, shaven-headed, light-skinned, slight, agile, falsetto-voiced, with quick, intelligent faces. But some have the heavier negroid touch about their features, and full-blooded negroes are not few.

We passed the palace of the Pasha, an ostentatious building of plastered white, the walls of the main portico gay with a blue and

red and green mosaic design. It is the only white building in the town, with the exception of the Hôtel du Pacha and one or two shrines of saints.

The Hôtel du Pacha, which stands at one side of the market square, is a queer place. The Pasha, in the desire to convince the French of his progressive tendencies, and with a genuine love of innovation, has built what is a large native house, and placed in one or two of the rooms some small iron bedsteads. His greatest inspiration is, however, the café, wherein have been crowded enormous quantities of small iron chairs and tables, such as are familiar in any *estaminet* between Calais and Luchon. Here the men of Tarudant—a comfortable, cross-legged race who have squatted meditatively upon the earth or rugs since Jugurtha's days—if they would please the Pasha, must sit all evening sipping minted tea and listening to the original jazz music of four efficient Africans—veritably the most formidable makers of jazz it has ever been my misfortune to be near. Such is the ingenuous course of progress in this last corner of Morocco, which an enlightened Pasha introduces, though the *commis-*

voyageurs may not yet come nearer than Mogador : in Tarudant—eleven Fords, the telephone, one air-cushion, one piano, some pairs of goggles and the iron chairs and bedsteads. And long may the Haha and the Hawara continue to be dissident ; long may the road from Agadir lack metal ; and long may the fleas, nimble Prætorians of the picturesque, flourish, grow strong and multiply, to hold against all new-comers those intolerable bedsteads of the Hôtel du Pacha.

V

WE ran the Citroën into a narrow alley of new shops, which the Pasha is building behind the Hôtel, and the end of which shuts with a great cedar-wood gate. Mine host, refusing to let us lounge on the more comfortable wall, brought us out some of the iron chairs, and we sat in the cool of the evening, at the doorway of the Hôtel du Pacha, sipping coffee and slaughtering mosquitoes. Presently the sound of a cannon-shot informed the town that the day's fast was over—we were in Ramadan—and a crowd of urchins flocked round our table to partake of the

soup which the Pasha provides free to the children of the poor, each evening. A few young men lounged round, cheerfully curious, and Muhammad discoursed to them on the events of the journey. A pleasant lot they were, easy and friendly, with none of that brooding animosity to be encountered in other parts of the East. And in this familiarity we see the secret of the success of the French mentality in administering Oriental peoples. There is no colour distinction; in fact the French regard the Berbers—probably correctly—as definitely kin to the peoples of the northern shores of the Mediterranean. The intercourse of the Frenchman with the *indigènes* is as intercourse with children, simple, entertaining, without condescension. The French mix with them quite naturally in their work and in their fighting, in the streets and in the cafés—a relationship of elder and child, rather than of master and servant. Yet when the savage anger of the primitive man is roused, the Frenchman shoots quick, and his native troops shoot with him, and there is order again, firm, disciplined and friendly, when those who forget the way of mitrailleuses have taken another

lesson. The Frenchman is in North Africa for his own good and for the greatness of France, not soaped over with high-minded tags of soft city-folk that think in circles—and the *indigène* knows it and respects him for his honesty and for the interested good he brings, in relief from *Kaids'* oppression, equal-handed justice, better agriculture, roads and sanitation. He does not rise up to use the vapoured platitudes of transatlantic professorial persons against the Frenchman, for the Frenchman has not pretended that life is run on fourteen points. So in Morocco the white man is neither spat upon nor shot at in the streets. Nor is the voice of the *baboo* heard in the land, unless he happens to be yelping to the thwackings of the bastinado, wielded by sturdy countrymen upon the orders of His Sherifian Majesty.

About eight o'clock we went up to the café and sat down to a most prodigious meal, especially good, we understand, by order of the Pasha. A great dish of well-stewed juicy fowl and then the like of mutton, and afterwards the famous dish called *kúskúsú*, which has a base in a great pile of hot white pulse, well seasoned with pepper and scarlet pimen-

toes, and round it are dainty bits of fat and kidney, hard-boiled egg and chicken's liver. And the deeper you dip with fingers into the pile of pulse the hotter and the tastier it is. The whole washed down with large round bowls of thick sour milk, which goes to digest all the savoury juices that have gone before. And then, pipes loaded and sipping our sweet minted tea, we sit back as comfortably as possible on those little iron French chairs to watch the men of Tarudant stream in for their tea and *kîf* and evening's music.

While Ronchi is asking me questions which I cannot answer about the mechanical idiosyncrasies of English cars, the room is becoming packed with the genial, smiling, nodding, staring Tarudanti, until, when the negro band begins to crash, we find ourselves well wedged against it.

The *kîf* goes round, plugged neat into long-stemmed pipes with bowls the size of thimbles, and I find, like drinks in a Belfast bar, that you are damned for good if you refuse it. A hard *kîf* smoker, of fifty pipes a day or more, remains in a perpetual stupor; and so I eventually compromise for the evening by mixing a little with my pipe tobacco, which

makes it to the palate very sweet and soothing.

My neighbour is a curious man, with about his person an aroma that would put a skunk to shame. He has great coal-black eyes, and a mass of bushy, tangled hair reaching round his shoulders, a large hooked nose and big black, curly beard that recalls Assyrian sculptures. He wears a greasy, faded orange *kaftan* falling to the knees, and the rags of a black and grey *jelaba*. For all his dirt, and his vacant manner of the *kîf* fiend, he has an air almost of distinction—he is no fellow of these rustic parts. He begins to speak in quite good French, and gradually, between his long, staring silences and suckings at his *kîf*, I find he is a Syrian, who has fought the war in France and knows Italy, Austria and Switzerland quite well. He always wanders, and he gives no reason—not even the lust for it. But somehow he has found his way all over North Africa and recently has come from Tiznit, nearly two hundred miles farther south. Ronchi is nudging me and shaking his head. “C’est un fou—fou de *kîf*,” he whispers, and as I get up to go to bed, this strange pilgrim with

his noble head and his bland, vacant, mad-man's smile, asks me to buy him another pipeful. With three 50-centime-pieces he is courteously delighted.

Although after twelve, the crashing of the negro band made sleep impossible and I leaned out of the narrow window, smoking a last pipe, to think back over the long day that had begun in Mogador. To my left the lights of the Pasha's café; in front the pale outlines of the market place, where the people, restless in Ramadan, were still strolling up and down, grey shadows in the moonlight; right beneath the window the small square of the grass market where two sombre camels slept, their long necks leaning upright even in their sleep; and in a corner two emaciated donkeys dodged and backed in the short scamperings of hobbled creatures, seeking the great consolation which is vouchsafed to the most mean and miserable of living things. A magnificent moon lit the whole hot night—the mass of palm trees standing out black against the purple sky; the low, shadowy walls of the grass market and the higher walls, across the square, of the squat, flat-roofed, narrow-windowed houses; the

white, round dome of a *marabout* and the distant slim square minaret of a mosque, rising above the houses. The music ceased, and people came streaming out of the café, disappearing down the narrow alleyways leading off the square. Nothing more to hear but the droning voices of belated ones, the perpetual chirrup of the crickets, croaking of the frogs, and the city's curs, each taking up the other's howl. But in Ramadan, the Faithful do not sleep at night, and the Infidel, who keeps the day, may toss and turn to the sounds of revelry. About two in the morning they take their last refreshments, before the fast begins again at four. And so breaks out, and lasts till four, the most unearthly rasp and grind and whistle of their flutes and pipes, and he who wants to sleep must wait again until he is left in the comparative silence of the always yapping dogs, and of all the domestic animals and birds, who, of course, at four begin to wake.

I slept long in the morning, and after a meal again of that fine dish *kúskúsú* and several Tarudanti oranges—which oranges are twice the size of those of Marrakesh and quite as sweet, costing six francs a hundred—

went out along the hot and dusty lanes to pay my respects to the Pasha. A crowd stood round the doorway of the Palace, waiting by a fine Minerva—big negro slaves with wide silver rings through the lobes of their right ears, some Arab soldiers and Berber country-folk. It appeared that the Pasha was just going out for his daily drive, and while a slave was showing me with pride his air-cushion, there was a stir, Muhammad pulled my sleeve, and I turned to find the crowd kissing the Pasha's hem, and the hem of his son, Ahmad.

The Pasha of Tarudant seemed a man not over forty, of the same easy carriage and condescending bearing and the same fine features as his son. A thin, pointed beard and a heavier figure alone distinguished him in age. His expression was dignified, pleasant, benevolent rather than strong. He waved me to a man who appeared a kind of majordomo, and invited me to look over his Palace and gardens.

The Palace was of the familiar kind to be seen in Fez or Marrakesh, large, cool, nearly windowless rooms, round a central court which formed a pleasant garden of palms

and orange and mimosa, watered by miniature canals. Two young gazelles walked among the shrubs, and came to lick the hands of the major-domo. The chief charm of the Palace was a tall tower, built out from the roof, which looked out on a large uncultivated garden, and beyond over the narrow lanes and crumbling walls to the tawny pile of the Kaspā, filling the north-east corner of the city. The view was magnificent: to the north, the blue line of the Atlas, with dim white snow-peaks showing; to the south, the lower, irregular and more distant smudge of the Little Atlas; all round the green scrub of the argān forest, and, beneath, the taller palm groves within the walls of Tarudant.

In the afternoon heat the town seemed empty, silent and deserted, and from this point it is easiest to realise that Tarudant is half in ruins, less than half inhabited. For the walls enclose great rubbish-places and wide patches of untended ground. The ruined capital of Sûs lies round, and in it all the tale of the decay of Islam. But Tarudant, proud and favourite appanage of the brilliant Saadian Sultans, crumbling as

it is, is yet the only city left in Sûs, which in the days of Leo, four hundred years ago, numbered cities far larger and greater than this. To his account of the forgotten towns of Haha, Leo can add the towns of Sûs. Thirty miles eastward of Tarudant, in Leo's day, stood the city of Tedsî, three miles distant from the Wady Sûs. Tedsî held a great Monday market for the country round, and here was a thriving colony of Jews, "which are most cunning goldsmiths, carpenters, and suchlike artificers." Tedsî, like the other cities of Sûs, was then a centre of sugar cultivation—the production of which in the Sûs is now unknown :—" And you shall finde in this citie many merchants which come out of the lande of Negros for trafiques sake."

Further down the Wady Sûs, between Tarudant and the sea, stood the town of Teijent, the remnants of which may be now the wretched village of Tizuit. The region of Teijent was rich in grain, barley and pulse, and also in figs, grapes, peaches and dates. And " they have here likewise a good quantitie of sugar growing ; howbeit because they know not how to presse, boyle and trim

it, they cannot have it but blacke and unsavorie; wherefore so much as they can spare, they sell vnto the merchants of Maroco (Marrakesh), of Fez, and of the land of Negros."

But greatest of all the cities of Sûs was Tagauost, which Leo locates sixty miles from the sea, and fifty miles south of the Atlas, but the site of which is unknown. "In all Sûs there is no citie comparable vnto that which is commonly called Tagauost: for it containeth about eight thousand households. . . . In this citie are made certaine kindes of apparell, which are vsually carried for merchandise once a yeere to Tombuto (Timbûktû), to Gualata (Walata), and to other places in the land of Negros. Their market is twice every weeke: their attire is somewhat decent and comely: their women are beautiful: but their men are of a tawnie and swart colour by reason they are descended of blacke fathers and white mothers. . . . I myself remained heere thirteene daies with the Seriffo his principall Chancellour, who went thither of purpose to buie certaine slaves for his lord, in the yeere of the Hegeira 919, which was in the yeere of our Lord, 1510."

Sûs has long since lost its thriving market-towns, its profitable production of sugar, and its trade with the Sudan and Guinea regions. In the eighteenth century we have one glance at the progression of its decay, when Lemprière, a priggish surgeon from Gibraltar, visited Tarudant to cure the eyes of its dissolute royal Governor, and attend the ladies of his harîm.

And nowadays the Sûsi leave their land in thousands every year to try their fortune as bakers, barbers, porters and leather workers all over North Africa and even to Marseilles, from which parts a good number return in later life, to settle down as monied yeomen in their unprofitable native land.

VI

WE had planned to leave Tarudant at four in the morning, and come to the slopes of the Bibawan about daybreak, in order that we should have the whole day to reach Imi-n-tanût, at the northern end of the Pass, before night. There was only one French fort in the Pass, at Bigûdin, not far from the southern end, and we had been advised not

to spend the night in any of the villages between there and Imi-n-tanût.

To explain subsequent events it is necessary to refer to the person of Muhammad, the hanger-on round Ronchi's garage, and aforesaid brother of the Pasha's second chauffeur, whom we had brought as guide.

Muhammad had all the makings of a *baboo*, and there can be no doubt that, born in Calcutta instead of Marrakesh, he might have slobbered through an English university, and lived to yelp and froth and fill his pockets as the friend of wage-slaves in some Provincial Assembly.

His body, badly put together, weak and loose of bone, was topped by a large white, frightened face, covered with black scrub, and perpetually moist from the vehemence of his conversation. He spoke fluently his native tongue and French, and was apparently quite unintelligible in both, borrowed everybody's cigarettes and clamoured for his wages in advance. At night time he was seized with an enthusiasm for Ramadan, which he had never evinced during the daylight hours of fast, and in Mogador and Tarudant he kept the feast in hectic irregularities, it being

his custom to return to wake us in the early morning, a speechless physical wreck, who slept all day when he was wanted.

Nevertheless he had a certain whimsical humour which redeemed him from complete baboobyism, and when Ronchi pushed him into a pond, left him behind on the road in the middle of the Atlas, to run frantically for a mile after the car, fired a revolver shot through his fez, or stuck a knife in his leg to wake him, he would, after a moment of raving expletives, treat the matter in ingenuous good part.

On the second night, after dining late in the café, we went out into the town and wandered through the square, where the Berbers, gay in Ramadan, were wandering, talking in shrouded groups of three and four, lighting their way with tallow-lit brass lanterns, which they swung languidly, level with their knees.

As we turned the corner into a lane, which led from the main square of the town, we saw two figures standing in the shadow, who threw some words to us. And coming closer, I saw the Pasha's son, leaning upon a staff and smoking a cigarette, and behind him

against the wall gleamed the white eyeballs and great silver earring of a negro slave. Like the sons of Kings in Arab tales, Ahmad walked the streets at night unknown, to see the ways of the people and hear their feelings of his father.

Muhammad, as is the custom with young and worldly men who are entertaining strangers, was set upon showing us the lewder side of life in this town of Tarudant. And he led us by many lanes, to a crooked and sinister street of high walls, from which came out, dolefully and intermittently, the rasp of pipes and the rattle of knuckles on invisible tambourines. Curiously the same are men under their various shades of skin, for here, in a ruined town of the wilderness between the mountains and the desert, can be found such similar unsavoury and uncomfortable *milieux* where to escape the quiet which seems to weary men more than striving. But we found, after knocking on various wooden doors, and arousing the barking of dogs and squeals from within of that inevitable preliminary modesty affected by mercenary females, that we were not received with the simpering guileful hospitality which

greeted those who cross the portals of Pera or Montmartre.

Muhammad, after the fourth or fifth repulse, sniggering, apologised. “ Elles ne veulent pas. Pensent que vous êtes légionnaires. . . . Légionnaires boivent beaucoup ”—and he raised his elbow, making a sucking noise—“ cassent tout.” We walked away, until a musical lisp at Muhammad’s shoulder caused us to turn, and Muhammad was engaged in an enthusiastic and excited conversation. Then he explained to Ronchi. The lady was an old friend of his, and, further, she was the most beautiful and sought-after body in all Sûs. It happened that we had met her at an auspicious moment. Her husband had just been liberated after twenty-four hours’ imprisonment imposed upon him as the result of a financial dispute he had had with an admirer of her own. And we were welcome to the feast which was to celebrate his release. We were to follow her to her house in a quarter of an hour.

Therefore, after perambulating about for a few minutes, we came with Muhammad to a larger door in the ruined wall of the lane, and this door being opened to us by a little

girl, we found ourselves in a kind of yard or kitchen garden. And so, stumbling over some pumpkins and through a bed of stinging nettles, we entered into the boudoir of the first courtesan of Sûs. It was long and low and narrow, and being built of wood-boards and *tabiya* with a floor of earth, recalled, rather, in its proportions, a fairly capacious pig-stye.

There was no window, so that you were glad when the little girl made one of her frequent journeys into the yard, and provided an exit for the combined breathing and cigarette smoke of the eight people present. The lady herself, a buxom and not ill-favoured creature of aggressively cheerful disposition, squatted at the end of the compartment, a wide brass tray before her, off which she passed small glasses of minted tea to her guests. On one side of her sat her recently liberated husband, a long and rather flabby young man, with a bald head and a flat, negroid face, badly marked by small-pox. On the other side sat Muhammad, who from the number of prods and slaps she gave him appeared to be very much in the good graces of the hostess. The three

Europeans sat cross-legged opposite, and in the background, a sententious old woman, who drummed mournfully and fitfully upon a tambourine.

Half an hour passed, during which Muhammad occasionally troubled, between peals of cackling laughter and uproarious back-slapping, to interpret some particularly trite saying of our hostess. Then we departed, leaving Muhammad to his hilarious dissipation, with a warning not to fail us at four o'clock in the morning.

It was nearly one o'clock before we had found our way through the winding lanes to the Hôtel du Pacha, and, warned against attempting sleep by the crashing of the negro band, I settled down till four to read an account of Brussilov's campaign in Galicia, for in the literature to read when travelling it is possible to introduce a pleasant sense of contrast and anachronism.

At four o'clock we collected and drank black coffee, then brought the Citroën buzzing into the square before the Hôtel du Pacha, and played the Klaxon for ten minutes, but Muhammad never appeared.

When you have risen of a set purpose at

four in the morning, and in fact not slept all night, you do not think kindly on a hireling who permits his friends to detain him against his duty; and presently we were calling for Muhammad's blood. Gladly we would have left him to find his way back on foot to Marrakesh, wearily and lengthily, if and when a caravan might go there. But, unfortunately, we were not only ignorant of the road over the mountains—which we might nevertheless have found for lack of the existence of other roads—but we could not possibly extricate ourselves from the lanes of the town without Muhammad.

Once we tried to find the way to the gate, and after nearly sliding into a pond, went on, and were brought up against one of those internal gates which are frequent in a Moorish town.

At last, after turning back several times, we found our way as far as the Pasha's Palace, and there unearthed a negro porter, who took us to Muhammad's brother's house. He, the brother, then guided us to the house of Muhammad's dissipated friends, who, after much use of the Klaxon, emerged and informed us sulkily that Muhammad had left

an hour before and gone to the baths. The custodian of the baths protested that Muhammad had not long left to seek us at the hotel, and the porter of the hotel said that he had gone running in a frenzy of despair, not five minutes before, to the gate of Aûlad-ben-Nûna. He volunteered, for the consideration of a franc, to guide us there, and there, among the nettles and the crumbling brickwork of the wall by Aûlad-ben-Nûna, we found Muhammad, his head buried in his hands in an attitude of exaggerated despondency, for he knew well enough from the guard at the gate that we had not yet passed out.

It was now nearly six, and we had wasted the two precious hours for which we had abandoned our sleep. But here we found another difficulty, against which Muhammad as a good guide might have warned us, in that the gates are not opened until half-past six, when the keys are brought from the Pasha's Palace. And so, for another half hour, we paced up and down in the pale light before the dawn, muttering occasionally to the sleepy guard of Bab Aûlad-ben-Nûna, until at last we heard a hum, and there appeared round the corner one of the Pasha's Fords,

prepared also for the journey, for inside was a mechanic in khaki ducks and a fez, a nearly naked boy, his greaser, by him, and behind, two dim white figures, the bulkier of which, we were told, was a holy man, a friend of the Pasha's, going to Marrakesh.

The keys were produced, two implements made of cane and iron, the size of tennis racquets, and presently we swung out of Tarudant, the Ford, whose chauffeur could recognise the *piste* among the sand and bushes, even in the dark, going before us.

We went slowly past the walls of Tarudant, for it was difficult enough to keep the road, and I looked back on the ruined towers, dull pink in the pale, growing light. For if you lead a life easy and ordinary, for nearly always, the memory of such a place where you have stopped two days of all your years remains, uneasy, like a phantom dragging. And if you look afterwards at photographs, those cheap gages of the past, that you have made of such, it is still difficult to realise that it exists, that it is not some flickering shadow in your brain, some intangible, half-forgotten memory of something that seems never to have been.

For half an hour longer we followed the Ford along the road which we had taken from Agadir. And then suddenly it pulled up, with a puncture, which, of course, they expected us to mend. And while Ronchi and Jean were working at it, I went up to speak with the holy man. A person of some importance he was, apparently, who came from Aûlûz, fief of the Gûndafi, further up the valley: a prodigiously fat man, wrapped in fine white linen, and showing proudly a pair of goggles: not more than thirty-five, with a plump, smooth face, cunning, lecherous and cynical, like an eighteenth-century abbé.

Presently he descended—incidentally throwing the car off its jack—and lumbered solemnly into the bushes, where we could see his body, ponderously white, kneeling and bowing eastward. And so in the dawn, under the Atlas, I smoked a pipe of Vigo St.; the Mullah from remote oasis Barony paid to God rich man's respect; some camels flitted past, soft-footed, saturninely chewing, leisurely, their drivers staring startled; and Ronchi jacked up again the Mullah's Ford.

We continued in the early morning light, turning north by the Senegalese fort, which

we had passed on the road from Agadir, and a few miles further on began to climb into the mountains. The *piste*, which is used for the provisioning of the French forts at Bigûdin and in Sûs, and much frequented by the caravans which carry the argân crop from Sûs to Marrakesh, is, in its steeper part especially, kept well in repair, and it is only after Bigûdin, where it follows a comparatively level course through a sort of rocky valley between the higher mountains on either side, that its condition is really execrable. In fact, as far as Bigûdin it hugs the rims of precipices in precarious hairpin bends, and clings to the steep mountain side, and if not banked with rocks and stones in places, and ledged and walled in others, it would be veritably impassable for all but the surest-footed of mules. As it is, it is really a creditable feat of rough-and-ready engineering, and it is wide enough everywhere for a car to pass a string of loaded camels, shying, nervous and jibbing as they always are at the unfamiliar noise and smell.

To describe the scenery of mountains from merely passing over is as presumptuous as to write of a nation from staying in their capital

and any description of this marvellous road must be left to those who, when conditions become more settled, can camp and climb at leisure hereabouts.

The southern side of the Atlas, from the Sûs to Bigûdin, is incomparably more beautiful than the northern side, accessible from Amismis and Asni. The Atlas are, indeed, desert mountains, and their slopes lack the rich wooded beauty of other mountains—the firs and larches of the Tatra, strong and straight and young and crowding, or the coloured singing glens of Balkan.

The Atlas are bare and poor, but not so stark as the mountains of Montenegro, and their glory is their deep, clefted valleys, which, unlike the foetid malarial *polye* of Montenegro, are full and fertile, wet and sun-lit, fresh and green.

In the distance the Atlas are lovely, noble, ethereal; and when in the evening the falling sun tints their lean, snow-edged peaks, as you look at them from Amismis, they seem not of the earth, part of the sunset; or when again in the early morning the black and loaded clouds push up against and overcrowd their tops and flanks, all the swaying,

moving, threatening, rushing grey is as an angry sea. But to love the Atlas and to know their friendship, their kindness and their peace, you should wander on a sagacious, plodding donkey, over their precarious paths, as you may do over the northern slopes, south of Asni and Amismis. Ride thus over the mountains, when the sun comes to lift the mists with a sudden overmastering flood of gold, and to warm the young argan bushes, climbing up and climbing down beyond you. Around vast landscapes of sloping mountain sides of ruddy soil and bright green bushes; deep valleys where cling precariously, beside a glittering stream, little squat red castles, with red hovels piled all round; and beyond, on either side, the mountains rising to long, stern, bare, folding ridges of grey rock, and here and there behind them the shallow snow clothing a higher peak; and behind you to the north, right down, below, the whole broad plain of Marrakesh, beginning to swelter in the morning sun which here on the mountain path just warms you pleasantly—the red burning plain of Marrakesh, with far in the distance, forty miles away, the vast palm forests round the city's pigmy towers, and

nearer down below the long, thin oasis of Amismis, and the rounder, squarer oasis of Tameslought, green patches in the red.

Such are the northern slopes, peaceful, less lovely than the southern, where nowadays still you must pass over without delay. Yet, even passing rapidly, you may see something of the greater beauty of this southern side. The *piste* climbs and winds round mountain sides, cool and moist in the morning mists, and you can enjoy such mountain coolness to the full only in the Atlas after lying sweating in the burning plains to north and south. Such a road, with rocks and peaks above, and a swinging slope or clean-cut precipice below, with its sudden bends and swift descents and abrupt uprisings, places the traveller absolutely at the aiming of the evilly-disposed. And in the days before the French came, the caravans from Sûs paid heavy blackmail to the local tribes. But in present days Kaid-el-Gûndafi makes himself more or less responsible for the safety of the road; once, in fact, turning a sudden bend, we came upon his guard, a lean, grey-faced Berber, perched squatting on a rock, who looked at us suspiciously like some baulked

bird of prey, his ancient *jezail* covering us in unfriendly poise.

As you enter the mountains from Sûs, the lower slopes are dotted with red, *tabiya*-built villages, but further, higher, there is little life, not even shepherds on the hillsides, only now and again small caravans of travellers, generally a dozen camels or a couple of camels and a few donkeys in each lot. But once or twice we passed above one of these deep cleft-like valleys which are the greatest beauty of the road. They are long and winding, steep and narrow, not more than four hundred yards across from one mountain to another. But far below at the bottom shines a broken, rock-strewn, climbing, tumbling, shallow stream; and all the sides of the slopes down are rich with squat, ragged argan shrubs, near grown to trees; and at the foot, stretching upward long and straight, are palm trees, broader and stronger than any seen in Marrakesh or Tarudant. Along the stream, among the palm trees and overhanging this rare place of water, are little hamlets of red earth; and at one end of the valley or the other, holding the lord of it, some compound of huts and walls and towers, looking from

above like the miniature of a castle; and along the valley, and up and down the slopes, small gardens stretched, of olives, figs, oranges and dates and vegetables, wherever the ground is level and holds earth.

After Bigûdin, the *piste* runs through a kind of shallow plateau, which is bounded on either side by sombre lines of bare grey peaks. It is a wilderness of argàn scrub, with here and there to be found some collection of miserable huts. But the heat of approaching noon was not excessive even there. Animal life was scarce, save for gerboas; and occasional small flocks of pigeons were the only birds we noticed. The peaks to the right of us were said to be a favourite summer haunt of the moufflon, who here, and in the Jebel Saghrû south of Tarudant, are more numerous than in any other part of the Atlas.

Coming down to Imi-n-tanût, at the northern end of the pass, the road runs through the most desolate tract of the Atlas that I have seen. The mountain-sides here are bare in many places even of scrub, and the yellowness of the soil makes the landscape veritably ugly. The air was damp with mist, though it was afternoon, and heavy grey clouds

loomed above over the mountains. But only a drizzle of rain came, and we found later that this same cloud-mass had hung all day over Marrakesh, where the farmers of the plains and the gardeners of the city waited for the rare and blessed rain, which failed to fall.

Imi-n-tanût lies on the very outer lip of the Atlas, and the *piste* swings and curves down to it, in bends which recall the hair-pin course down Lovčen. Imi-n-tanût seems somehow a grotesque and sinister place, a sordid collection of yellowish huts piled against a small castle on one side of the narrow valley ; and opposite a Senegalese camp of dirty white tents and half-built huts, fenced with barbed wire and sandbags—the whole, pressed narrowly within bare, savage mountain sides of grey and yellow rock, against which are to be found in a place of perpendicular cliffs, high up and inaccessible, some hidden caves, man-made apparently, but now mysterious and deserted.

In the Senegalese camp of Imi-n-tanût I had stayed before a night ; so I found here two old friends and went into the lieutenant's hut to have a good and belated lunch of rolls and oranges and coffee. Among his ammunition

boxes and his biscuit tins the lieutenant sat, hands on knees, elbows stuck out, smoking a small, much-burnt briar—a little plump man from the Pas de Calais, yellow crop-haired, with small blue eyes and broad ruddy cheeks. Taciturn, genial, abrupt, hospitable. Was he not bored here? There is too much work, building huts to replace the tents, teaching French to his *bons garçons*, making his reports, ordering and arranging his stores, “et puis il y a toujours la chasse.” Both he and his friend, Poileau the farmer, were enthusiasts for *la chasse*. Moufflon and boar, pigeons and partridges as thick as sparrows. And two days before, Poileau had shot at a panther. Poileau came in and apologised for his hands—he had been mixing bran for his pigs. From the Midi, slight and lean and wiry, quiet shrewd black eyes, a witty smile, and ready, voluble, too-rapid-to-be-comprehended conversation, a great shaggy black beard, a ragged shirt showing a thick thatch of hair upon the chest, and corduroy breeches with hands shoved into jockeys’ pockets—such was Poileau, the first French farmer in Gûndafi’s country, former schoolmaster from Marrakesh, gabbling archæology, Muham-

madan psychology, Balzac, *la chasse*. And next week he was going to Casablanca to bring a wife from Yères back to his farm, to the house built with his own hands at Imi-n-tanût on the flank of the Atlas.

Such are these Colonial Frenchmen, whom of all Frenchmen we know least, these Colonial Frenchmen who pressed us hard in the Indies and the Americas, who wasted their time marching from Lisbon to Moscow while we were planting colonies, and who now, after the losses of the war, are setting out to build an Empire in North Africa greater than Rome's, while we are faltering and wondering about Constitutional Reforms and Indian immigration into white men's parts of Africa.

We sat late through the afternoon over brandy and coffee and pipes, and it was growing cool before we took the twenty odd miles of *piste* that run through the desert from Imi-n-tanût to Sheshawa. At Sheshawa we foregathered again for brandy with Alceste and his misanthropic master, and later arrived at Marrakesh, having been away to Tarudant four nights and having taken, as Ronchi, gratified, remarked, only two days of actual motoring time upon the road.

VII

DUE east of Marrakesh, along the bare plateaux which spread behind Demnat, may be traced the division between the *massifs* of the Great and the Middle Atlas. The chains merge and spread each into the other, but the general direction of the two is distinct—that of the Great Atlas N.E. by E. to S.W. by W.; that of the Middle Atlas N.N.E. to S.W. And both the natural and historical geography of the two blocks of mountains are absolutely different. The Great Atlas is of the Sahara : its dried flanks hold no heavy timber, and its peopled places are a coast along a sea of sand, and islands in it—its wealth is the date-palm, the olive, the fig, and the tropical argan which does not grow well north of Haha. The Middle Atlas, at right-angles, indeed, to the Sahara on its eastern flanks, is really a mountain land of the Atlantic. The moist winds of the ocean, sweeping across the green *béled* of El-Gharb, come against the Middle Atlas straight and square, and soak and freeze the upland villages. Thus the Middle Atlas is a land, not of sun-bred fruits, but of cereals, of timber and of flocks. The grassy upland

steppes support great herds of sheep and cattle, and the mountains bear the venerable dignity of the greatest cedars in Africa, and of oaks as old and strong as the oaks of Caucasus.

Historically, the Great Atlas and the Middle Atlas are also vastly different. The Great Atlas is a wall, a wall between the cultivated and civilised Moroccan *béled* and the bleak waste of the Sahara, but a wall with gates—the coast road along from Mogador to Agadir, the Bibawan Pass from Marrakesh down to Tarudant, and the track past Gûndafi to Aûlûz and the higher valley of the Sûs. The masters of these gates are the masters of the mountains and of the traders who have always passed thereover, and they grow rich and strong, tyrannical, accordingly, M'tûgi, Ghellûli, Gûndafi, Glawi. Their state is feudal, and there has grown up round them a little of the feudal civilisation, castles, walled towns, protected trade with its amenities, something of ease, architecture, taste in arms and comfortable luxury and rich man's show, the beginnings of the arts.

The Middle Atlas, again, is different, freer and less civilised. It is not a wall with masters set thereon, it is a mass, inchoate, confused,

unconquered. The armies of the Sultans were lost in its weary passes and destroyed from its impassable sides. And its poor, free men would have none among them raising himself to build a castle there, and reign a domineering and oppressive *Kaid*. They consulted in their councils, all equal, as free men think best, choosing a leader for foray or defence, but falling away after, and the leader going back to look after his own herding, or his lumbering. Thus in the Middle Atlas, no great feudal state as in the South, nor autocratic Sultan as in the flat, open and helpless *béled*, but free tribes of men in free and equal communion—herdsmen, woodsmen and charcoal burners. And all through the centuries, the Sultan never rules on the mountains, but comes, if he be strong enough, to collect tribute in arrears, and men for the wars, and watches the mountains constantly from imperial Meknès in the north, from Tadla on the south, high up the stream of Um-er-R'bia—holding the mountain herdsmen off the lowlands, or letting their flocks through in the winter only for a yearly tribute. And if the Sultan must pass from north to south, from Fez to Tafilelt, he went over and round, in strong force and giving

presents on the road, by Sefrû, and through the cedar forests down the gorges past Timhadit, into the rocky wilderness over the Wady Mûlûya when he was through the mountains.

The French hold the Middle Atlas block precariously, and have but recently got their grip upon it. On the west, their garrisons at Kaspa Tadla and Khenifra guard the line of the Um-er-R'bia and they are linked by forts across the mountains, with Midelt at the head of the Wady Mûlûya. From the north they have carried the road from Sefrû down to Timhadit, which, again, is linked with Midelt. They hold the three sides of a triangle, and the tribesmen bring their flocks and herds down to the *béled* in summer, only with French consent. But the French grip hereabouts is still only the grip of watchful soldiers—it is a *zone dissidente*, held but not pacified, nor even comparatively pacific, as is the Southern Atlas.

This country, therefore, may still only be seen in the French posts, or under the protection of an occasional French column.

To ride leisurely with a French column is obviously best, but I found that the passage

of such is rare, and I determined to take the Citroën, by the comparatively good *piste* over the Béled-el-Hamra as far as Caspa Tadla and then try the luck of the more perilous track to Khenifra. From Khenifra up to Azarû the *piste* gradually improves, and from Azarû I hoped to work down by a fair track to Timhadit and Midelt, and then to follow the valley of the Mûlûya to Ujda.

Ronchi was not available for this journey, and Jean, his brother-in-law, whom I had found to be egregious and unresourceful as a travelling companion, and nervous as a chauffeur, came, accompanied by a small Arab boy for greaser and interpreter. My brother, who had arrived from Spain with two copious suit-cases, joined me, and I had twice the weight of luggage that I took to Tarudant. We did not leave Marrakesh till the heat of the day was on us, and before we had gone two hundred yards the Citroën coughed ominously and had to be tinkered for half an hour. At last, like an over-loaded launch, she spurted and jerked across the Béled-el-Hamra. The natural, obvious and inevitable Nemesis which is ordained for those who make a late start and have not done all their tinkering the night

before is a puncture. But St. Nicholas, or whoever it is that watches over travellers in the Roman Calendar, was wrath at the sloth and slovenliness of his devotees, and he did not flagellate our souls with a puncture; he flayed them with a burst. The burst happened at a few minutes beyond noon, when the sun flared ferociously directly overhead, and with much perspiration of body and mind we adjusted our only spare tyre.

The Béled-el-Hamra—"the red plain" of the South—ochre-tinted like the walls of Marrakesh—is a different world from the Béled-el-Gharb, "the Western Plain" between Casablanca and Fez. El-Gharb is a distance of steppe and upland, fertile enough in parts and flecked with crowded villages, and even its barren and uncultivated uplands are in spring a glory of growing things—carpets of purple thyme and scarlet poppies, ruddy clumps of pimpernel, white splashes of marguerite, mauvish mignonette, blue hyacinths, and masses of deeper blue harebells, clusters of yellow mustard plant. The way across El-Gharb in "the time of herbage" under the cool spring sun, kissed by hillside breezes, is a laughing, singing way. But El-Hamra is always dreary, a

bleak and hot-baked waste, not even wilderness—for wilderness is at least a place of growth and weeds—more dreadful than the wilderness. Here man, lean and starved and hopeless, is struggling always to maintain his life, to create life and to hold life in his skinny stock. The cracked and dried-out runnels everywhere are the signs of man's effort to conserve and carry water, and the mean dried villages of dirty thatched hovels and skin tents, walled by a hedge of cactus—the only green thing around—or a prickly fence of some greyish burnt-up bushes, show how near to mud and dust man goes to keep the life in him. Here in these baked and parched-out districts of El-Hamra, of the savage and once formidable Rahamna tribes, are the sordid campings of God's leanest men—low tents, not three feet high, of blackened skin supported by a pole, with neither covering back nor front, and in them and about them blackish-coloured, skinny, thin-boned naked folk—some gipsy tribe—having in all the world a pack of wretched, wildly barking curs, and a few emaciated donkeys browsing in the dust.

Centre of this scabrous land is El-Kela'a, squat, ruddy-pinkish walls, low standing out

of the scorching ruddy plain. In the heat of the glaring square we stop for coffee, outside a broken-down shed labelled "Café de France" with chipped tin placards—"Benzol"—"Vermouth Candy." A wall-eyed man on crutches, tousled and unshaven, mutters round us, and his woman, fat, powdered and diseased, comes leering at us, laying on the broken table brackish coffee, oranges—soft and greyish—rotten, bread—dirty from the floor—the only French civilians in El-Kela'a. To the green El-Gharb men come to make their fortunes, sunburnt, young and cheerful; here in this dried, simmering, seething place, two wrecks have nosed a hole to die.

Under the walls of El-Kela'a, outside the town, we are delayed again with engine trouble, and have the time to watch the camp that lies here, white tents of the French, fenced in a square with prickly aloe scrub and reinforced with barbed wire. There is much to-and-fro of gun limbers and carts and wagons; all the soldiers are great hulking lubbers of Senegalese, and only occasionally a French *sous-officier*, small and spare beside the black men, perspiring, irritable and

flustered, in khaki shorts and dirty white sun-helmet. We take the road again. The country becomes less unamiable as we draw nearer to the Um-er-R'bia, showing more frequent villages, some few sparse patches of cultivated ground, flocks less miserable. Past Dar-ûld-Zidûh—insignificant market place, notable only for the death some thirty years ago of El-Hassan, last of the great Sultans, who wheezed out his heavy body here, weary with riding from Fez to Tafilalt, from Tafilalt to Marrakesh; great mediæval lord, bearded and bulky, ruthless to others and himself, he rode his empire endlessly, sitting ponderously his large white charger. And when he died at Dar-ûld-Zidûh in the heat, his viziers, fearful of insurrection—for the Berber holds allegiance to none between the dying of one Sultan and the instalment of the next, thinking it a time of licence—his viziers stuck him stinking in his splendid palanquin and carried him to Rabat, through the tribes who, fearful of living El-Hassan, would have leapt to loot the wealthy campment of a corpse.

After Dar-ûld-Zidûh, there is a wooden bridge which spans the turgid, brownish current of the Um-er-R'bia—"the Mother of

Grass"—welcome to see, broad, swirling through steep banks over this stony wilderness. The bridge is a natural place of halt for travellers, who rest here with their camels, mules and donkeys under its shady planks, and drink and bathe themselves, naked, brown and solemn, by the river bank. Seven hundred miles "the Mother of Grass" comes down, a splashing mountain stream out of Aguelman, remote tarn in the cedar mountains by Timhadit, through the falls and gorges of the Atlas, into the dry red plain, El-Hamra, along to water the goodly prairies of Dukhala, and down at last to the Atlantic beneath the antique walls of Azemmûr, in the old days a pirates' hold. Such is the kind the Mountain Atlas return in strong running streams to the Ocean Atlas—Um-er-R'bia, Bû Régreg, Sebû, the brawny children of the snows, out of the ocean's storms and rains.

From Dar-ûld-Zidûh to Kaspâ Tadla the *piste*, crossing the country north-west of the river, comes into barren, rolling downs. It is execrable, worse than in any part of Haha or the Sûs, from the fact that Kaspâ Tadla receives supplies direct from Casablanca by

Wady Zem and Bûjad, and this from Marrakesh and El-Kela'a, is a little-used cross-country track. Once we came very near disaster, for descending a steep slope, with a twist at the bottom, we failed to take the rise. The right front wheel heeled up over a boulder and we slid back. Only with great difficulty, and tediously shifting the boulders all the way, could we follow the bend of the dry *wady* which the *piste* had professed to cross, and eventually came out and round, and joined the *piste* again by a wide detour over the desert ground. But a bent front axle was the retribution for an overladen car.

In the late afternoon we came at last in view of Kaspa Tadla—a red-walled place upon a rocky hill, with the broad Um-er-R'bia curling round. The road curves up past the walls of Moorish Tadla, into the new French town—a camp of a town—straggling street of white-washed huts, some pretty villas of the officers and the large pile of the Bureau des Renseignements. At the end of the street is a barbed-wire compound, sentries posted, holding inside untidy ranks of wagons, lorries, guns and limbers. The broad and dusty street is the

street of the French soldier, the garages that are his soul, and the cafés that are his pleasure, with great high bars within holding all the sweet and sticky kinds of drinks and myriads of cigarettes that the Southerner loves instead of whisky and pipe tobacco.

We ran the car into a garage for attention to the axle, and spent a very genial evening in the inevitable "Café de France." They are a rough lot in this outpost—French civvies of the rather broken sort, *Légionnaires* of all nations, mostly Poles and Germans, shouting, sodden-drunk and bitter; big, shiny, crack-voiced, lubberly Senegalese, and perhaps a *sous-officier* or two, tempering the others, gruff, tidy, steady—with wives and families in clean huts down the street—stoutish and middle-aged. Brandy is the stuff they get drunk on here, sulky, roaring, knifing drunk. And mostly they have three-cornered fights—the Muhammadans, with jabbing, throwing knives, the negroes piston-fisted, the *Légionnaires* with gashing belts. An old sergeant had a tale to tell of a fight, on which a court-martial had sat that day, wherein two *Légionnaires* had flogged each other round the heads with steel clasp-ended belts, until one had rushed in on the

other with a knife, and the jugular had spurted blood. But this night they were quiet enough, and heavily polite to the fool Englishmen who bought them the freedom of the bar. And presently to the tune of a cracked gramophone the *Légionnaires* danced in twos, growing ever soddener on intermittent beers and brandies. No women and no money for the length of seven years is a sad state for men who have mostly fallen into banishment for the virility opprobrious in the cities of the tame. And over the beer mugs I grew sleepy, straining to catch the hiccoughed German of a gaunt, round-shouldered *Légionnaire* who had been on the submarine that sank the "Lusitania."

VIII

THE region of Tadla and the middle Umer-R'bia was, in the time of Leo Africanus, prosperous and well populated, but the progressive decline of the Sultan's sovereignty and the depredations of the Berber mountain tribes have caused it to decay into little but a wilderness. Between Kaspâ Tadla and Khenifra are seventy miles of country, barren and almost uninhabited. To the north-west,

indeed, is Bûjad, a centre of some religious import, the *zawia* of Seyid Muhammad es Chergui, who has a widely honoured sanctity, equal almost to that of the Sharifs of Wazzan and Tameslought, and who enjoys, like them, the donations, annually accumulating, of the devout. But this patch of country west of the Um-er-R'bia, a rough triangle between Tadla, Khenifra and Bûjad, a triangle of narrow valleys and ravines, bound with low, steep, jagged hills, is a waste of the Zaiane shepherds, and supports no village worth the name, a few agglomerations of hovels, such as El-Graar, Sidi Lamine, Affit.

Wearily and slowly, over a *piste* irregular, in parts almost disappearing, always boulder-strewn, we made this way, at twelve to fifteen miles an hour, meeting occasionally only a wild, half-naked shepherd boy, shouting at scuttering flocks of small black and reddish goats, and now three or four scurvy, bony camels, loaded with timber—and walking along beside their masters, lean, brown, lowering, muttering hostilely, with rifles slung back or gripped suspiciously. Such are these Beni Zemmûr and these Zaiane, most wild and formidable of the Middle Atlas tribes, but

recently submitted, who have fought bitterly every foot of all this country.

Past Sidi Lamine, where a whitewashed French post stands beside the conquered Zaiane "Kaspa," and looks over a broad expanse of mountain tops, the road becomes steeper but more regularly laid, passing over short, precipitous, crabbed hills, covered with great black volcanic rocks and short, stunted trees. On the descent of one such hill, disaster again befell us. Brakes failed to work, and we went crashing down. At the foot of the hillside the *piste* meandered over a broad and shallow rock-strewn *wady* and then climbed opposite. Ronchi could have taken this, and Jean might have managed it, but across the *wady* were reclining in a heap, slowly and luxuriously drinking, half a dozen donkeys and four camels. The car, crashing down, bumped softly, the front wheels thrust on to the backs of two prostrate donkeys; and under the engine were wedged and split three large sacks of corn.

Those plodding lumps of skin and bone, the donkeys, were not seriously hurt, the sacks had broken the impact. And the drivers contentedly and solemnly consigned ten francs

apiece to their leathern satchels for the loss of their master's corn, all soaking in the stream. In twenty minutes we had dragged the donkeys out and tugged the sacks away, and were spurting slowly up the hill, beyond which was Khenifra.

Khenifra lies in a wide and dusty plain, set over a low hill on a loop of the Um-er-R'bia. The red walls of the Kasper and the native town stand separate; and higher, three hundred yards of scorched hillside away, are the white huts and offices and cafés, and the sand-bagged, barbed-wire-bound compound of the French garrison. The landscape is sinister; under a glaring sun, bare grey hills slope down to the bare, grim, parching plain, and southwards the mountains open to a bloody, well-remembered spot, El-Herri.

Thirty years ago Khenifra was a fort, placed carefully, of Sultan El-Hassan, to watch the Zaiane country and hold the way open to Tadla and Bûjad. And to set a Zaiani to watch the Zaiane, El-Hassan appointed Kaid—Moha-û-Hammû-*ez-Zaiani*. When Mulai Hassan died, and all his neighbours, France and Spain and Germany, and all the great men of the land, his sons, the viziers,

Kaids of Atlas, Sheiks of Tafilét, were grabbing for their own, ez-Zaiani, watcher of the Zaiane, made his Zaiane Principality; took into his own service the *asaker* of the Sultan, grew rich on loot of caravans, and scared the soft townsmen of Meknès, raiding to their walls. Khenifra he made large and rich, building and favouring traders, bringing in skilled artisans from Sûs, and haling there adventurous merchants from Fez, Meknès and Rabat. A kind of Napoleonic Robin Hood was this Moha-û-Hammû, who led within Khenifra a gay and bawdy life, and gave his stalwart Zaiane all the blood and all the loot and all the lust they wanted. "The mountain is my being, the Um-er-R'bia is my girdle, my pasture is the plain," such were the words of Moha-û-Hammû, raker of the *béled*, snatcher of caravans, lord of the Zaiane.

At the beginning of 1914, the French having pacified the western *béled* and broken el-Hiba in the south, turned against Moha-û-Hammû, organising all the tribesmen of the plains who hated him. The French columns converged against Khenifra, though ez-Zaiani, "ce Vercingétorix de l'Atlas," fought hard by every rock. Khenifra was occupied, but the

Zaiane were not beaten, and they ambushed and severely mauled a small French *reconnaissance*. When the Great War broke out two-thirds of the French troops were withdrawn from Morocco. There was talk of retiring to the coast as the Italians did in Tripoli. The brothers Mannesmann and other German agents, working from the Spanish Zones and the Canaries, pushed Abdul Malek and the Rifi to attack the Fez-Taza corridor, and resuscitated El-Hiba beyond Wady Dra'a. Moha-û-Hammû saw his chance and flung himself against Khenifra, and, when repulsed, settled to a blockade. The French Commandant at Khenifra, hoping to raise the blockade, made a sortie to attack the Zaiane camp, ten miles to the south, through the break in the mountains, round the village of El-Herri. The tribesmen were taken by surprise, routed and scattered. But the native troops stayed to loot the dead, and Moha, watching vengeful, caught the column as it marched back weary up the ravine. Eight hundred men and over thirty officers were killed, and nearly two hundred more wounded. Two batteries of field-guns and many machine-guns fell into the hands of the Zaiane. It was

the first French defeat in Morocco, a great victory for the Zaiane, and in 1916 it was a portentous disaster to the French Colonial Army, already reduced to skeleton formations.

But the French reply was efficient, immediate and complete. Moha, like many a savage victor before him, rested on his victory when he might have seized Khenifra, whose garrison had been reduced to a remnant of two companies. Exactly a week after the disaster a French relieving column attacked in force and annihilated the camp at El-Herri, recapturing all the guns. Old Moha-û-Hammû never recovered his striking force, although he remained formidable for four years more. And finally, in 1920, when the many tribesmen had submitted and all his sons had gone over to the French, "ce Vercingétorix" was cornered and killed in a fight with the men of one of his sons.

In the hot hours of the early afternoon we lounged about the café, sweating, dusty, sick rather with the heat, flicking and sweeping off the flies. Lunch was a plate of eggs, some tough *tournedos* of scraggy Zaiane sheep, beer rancid and flat, thin, badly-sanded coffee. Over a baby billiard-table in the corner a

fat, red-whiskered young civilian clicked the large and unround, much-discoloured balls, gloomily, resentfully. Behind the bar a weedy, green-faced Italian sat tilted back, picking his teeth with moody care, coughing suddenly and violently upon the flies gathering like parties of health-drinkers upon the splashes of spilt beer-froth and round the sticky glasses. In the middle of the room four *Légionnaires* in khaki shorts and shirt-sleeves, flushed and sulky, sipped their brandies, grunting over poker. Thus are the walls of Empire held, dismally, bitterly, in these God-forgotten holes. Here the young men come, brawny, crude and violent, fallen here, because they are not fitting to the softer life that through the centuries has sprouted, flowered and rotted, far behind the forts and outposts of these sorts of tough, unprofitable men. And from here the men go out, after seven years, or fourteen years, broken, vicious, cynical, to rattle their sucked bones about the reeking alleys of all the splendid cities of Success.

Wanting of the epic of some grand poetic giant are these grim outposts of the damned. They must have been all very much the same,

these deadening places where the only spiritual relief can be something crude and violent, answering the stark cruelty of surrounding nature—raping, flaming drunkenness or shedding blood—the *castra* of the Romans stuck on these same glaring Atlas hills; the places of the Byzantines on the bleak and frozen slopes of Taurus; the *presidios* of Spain buried in the feverish forests of the Indies; and these outposts of our own now everywhere, held so cheap in glib, black-coated fools' orations and spiteful soap-box prattle, but the very fundamental base of all.

Towards four in the afternoon we start north-eastwards for Azarû with about seventy miles to go. We come, four miles from Khenifra, upon a penal camp of the Foreign Legion, wooden huts and white tents, heavily walled with sand-bags, and with a tangled mass of barbed-wire running round, for it lies against still *dissident* mountains. Further along the penalised *Légionnaires* are working on the road, hewing up great boulders and shovelling stones on to the uneven surface of the *piste*. When finished it will be a good tarred motor-road, linking Khenifra with Azarû and Meknès. Among the *Légionnaires*

here the German and Slav types largely predominate—and they are mostly German war-prisoners who, interned in Morocco, elected to stay there and join the Legion, or Russian Black Sea sailors from the remnants of Wrangel's fleet, interned some three years back at Bizerta in Tunis. Two boys, big, red-faced, stupid-looking, tallow-headed, stop us and ask in poor French for cigarettes, and we empty our cases for them and give them also matches. For apparently in these penal camps they are forbidden smoking. Further along the road we pass an Arab guard, astride a small pony, a rifle slung across his saddle, watching the *Légionnaires*.

The *piste* rises steadily by long easy curves round the sides of mountains. The landscape is very pleasant here—not too rugged heights, covered thickly with strong bushes and short trees. We are on the edge of the cedar country, for thirty miles to the east is the Lake of Aguelman, and the sources of the Um-er-R'bia, the centre of the forests. Westwards a line of regular dome-shaped mountains, the Jebel-Bû-Haîati, and behind the higher peaks of the Jebel-Arrar; stretching to north-west, the mass of Zarhûn, stronghold of the Beni

M'Gild, which looks down upon the plain of Meknès.

At intervals along the road are gangs of natives working on it, and here and there we pass the sand-bagged road-camps of the workmen and an occasional lorry, lumbering heavily over the narrow track. In the cool evening breeze we rise at last on to the broad plateau of Mrirt, which stretches for thirty miles to Azarû at its head, where the triangular mass of Zarhûn piles up to meet the main chain of the Middle Atlas. Mrirt is a broad and flat plateau, spreading on either side to serried lines of peaks. It is, as it were, a roof, the roof of all Morocco, cool and fresh and wind-swept, grassed richly like a steppe. Great flocks of fat and lusty sheep are on it, herds of small brown, healthy-looking cattle and droves of lean, lithe Berber ponies. It is a horseman's country, and the plain is dotted with them, herding the cattle, cantering lightly beside the *piste*, galloping at speed into the distance. And it is good to see this grassy prairie of the horsemen after the dreary, torrid, dust-choking *béled* with its shuffling camels and its painfully-padding donkeys.

Mrirt, Ait Lias, Ain Leuh, Tigrigra, the

villages are frequent and prosperous up to Azarû. A good country for a man to live in, this, for the French will have their road soon from Fez and Meknès and the whole land open to the *colon*. For a man with some small capital a farm upon this wide rich plain, good riding and good feeding, and behind good hunting over all the Middle Atlas, and to hand the flesh-pots of Moorish Fez and Parisian Casablanca, when you were tired for a month of the tough and open life. Indeed this Middle Atlas country, when it is quite pacified and roads have cut the triangle of the mountains, will support a great timber industry and profitable sheep-farming, the beginnings of which are already to be noted among the small knot of enterprising French *colons* which has come to Azarû.

Azarû lies in a trough-like depression at the far head of the long plateau of Mrirt. A straggly place, half-French, half-Berber, with all the lumber, the half-buildings and the rubbish of a frontiersman's settlement. A big mountain looms above, dull blackish, dotted in the evening light with the vague clumps of great cedars up its side. And as we climbed the road behind the town the sun

had gone beyond the last black naked ridge of the western mountains. Dull, coppered-grey, the clouds were drifting across a high-up hazy horizon of faint strands of changing shadowy pink and blue. A cool breeze gently flicked the dark heads of short orchard trees; above the stars had come into the pale mauve sky of beginning night; somewhere below came up the eternal yapping of the Moslem curs; across the road the bright lights of the café; the gruff, strident voices and sudden laughter of workmen and lumbermen, farmers and soldiers, drinking in the evening, faint ting of knocked glasses, grind of a gramophone, bang of a door, and boots scrunching on a floor—sounds of white men come into the Wilderness.

Over the coffee after supper we sat with Jean and decided to abandon further going south again by Timhadit to Midelt and the valley of the Mûlûya. The period of heat was well begun and would be worse in the stony eastern desert, along the Mûlûya up to Ujda. But, primarily, the Citroën could not be trusted without a thorough overhauling of two days or more in a good garage such as might be found at Meknès, and also, in my secret

opinion, friend Jean, who had already once or twice shown a quailing nerve, could not be trusted in places where Ronchi might have been reliable enough. Candidly, we were glad to be rid of him as a chauffeur, though as companion for the evenings he was the best of company. And so we decided in the morning to take the even, broad and level road to Meknès and abandon further going on the Atlas *pistes*.

Half-way down to Meknès, somewhere between Ito and El-Hajeb, on the bend of the road, as it rolls over a broad peak, we stopped, and went down to look again—God willing, not the last look—at the mountains of the Middle Atlas. We saw stretching, sloping for miles to the south and east, a vast, cup-like plateau—the Plain of Aduruch, I think. The prospect was immense, breathless, like looking near on the mountains of the moon, which always on a hot clear night seem so real, distinct, yet so incredible.

Distantly, away, this great plateau rolled up again, to wave on wave of mountain ridges, pale grey and sunlit under the young sky of this morning. Primitive, empty even as the moon, they seemed, unlivd by man, unconquerable, untouchable, mastering the feeble

unretentive eye, dragging the mean soul out, disembodying it, overwhelming it to cleanse and lighten, and thrust on it the meanness of its incidental life. In these mountains, in such mountains, the deserts and the seas, there is the truth of all things, unthinkable, unreasonable, not-to-be-believed, more sinister than Sphinx, harder than the souls of men, as just, as kind, as beautiful, as changeless as the Unknown God. Wherefore many men avoid the mountains and the seas or pass by and over hurriedly, not looking with their souls lest the soul should stir and, their logic crumbling, should leave to nakedness their tissue they have cherished.

An hour later we sat in the lounge of the luxurious hotel of the C. T. M. over against Meknès, sipping vermouth and picking over the back numbers of *Punch*.

March-May 1924.

IN MEMORIAM : AUBREY HERBERT

BOYISH, gallant, wayward, brilliant, true, the figure of Aubrey Herbert flickered across the heavy grey of to-day, the Knight without Fear and without Reproach of half-legendary chivalry.

He was rather of the type of the great Elizabethan gentleman; a traveller and adventurer through all his life, a genial-hearted soldier, no mean poet, original, generous and open in his beliefs. He loved greatly common life and his fellow-men. His book, "Mons, Anzac and Kut," may some day be recognised as one of the epics of the War. The horror and the humour of war, the grim joy of the fighter, run through every page of it. Herbert was so essentially a man, gay, almost irresponsible, simple, enthusiastic, laughing through life, breathing all its colour and its wonder. He sang the old humanities, in these days when we grow more and more to live by bread alone.

His reaction from the mechanistic outlook of to-day is clear in all his enthusiasms. He loved the stinking East, the lands of the ruddy sunlight, and the tumbling habitations. Tribal Albanians, Mediæval Turks, the old natural humanity of Islam, were his first loves and his last.

Herbert's poetry is little known nor appreciated; it has not become, in fact—fashionable. Yet there is about it a peculiar beauty and simplicity. In his verse as in his prose, his own spirit seems to be part of the beauty he expresses. It is all simple, casual, sad, yet glad and full of understanding. Seldom he condemns, and from his pen no drop of hatred fell, yet from things unclean we seem to see him draw away half unconsciously, as though he would not look on them, nor yet bear evil testimony. But at such he rode to pitch his strength, indeed without looking, for often has he withstood base things to his own disadvantage.

His poetry lacked the careful art, the studied beauty and the charming affectation of those who know that they are poets. He was rather a ballad-maker by the road, a man who sang when that temper came to him; among

other things a poet, not one who said, "I am a poet."

In the style of his poetry there is both classic form and passion. It holds neither the pert and sordid realism nor the whimpering introspection of the modern school. There is about it something Byronic. Yet Herbert's voice is clean and generous. He lacked the caddishness of genius.

In one way the minds of Herbert and Byron have close association : Herbert loved Albania with imagination, he served her with fidelity, he helped her with intelligence and sympathy : the last neurotic *beau geste* of Byron was his death for Greece. In those wild lands of the Adriatic the two strange spirits met : the Knight without Fear and without Reproach—the Poet without Shame and without Compare. But Byron's love for Greece was a personal thing like an egotist's self-admirable passion for a much-wanted woman. A bitter, peevish pariah, he cast the soiled glamour of his name over a desperately struggling peasantry, that the drawing-rooms might stare amazed at this last fantastic gallantry. Herbert, keen, ingenuous and loving, threw all his body and his mind into the struggle to

save Albania from the Liberators of the Balkans. He must have spoiled his frail body more in those hard wanderings he made over Albania; and those to whom an insignificant nation means a considerable concession, dubbed him by the sometimes noble name of crank. To Byron the throne of Greece would have seemed a magnificent drop-scene to the drama of Byron; it was scarcely known that Aubrey Herbert had been offered the throne of Albania.

Herbert was a man of great ideals, and in this ran the strength and weakness of his work. He judged all men by his own knightly standards. His love of humanity, his faith and charity, blinded him to ugly political realities. A man of gentle vision, he failed to perceive the dark side of the Irish character; a statesman of wide, but too hopeful conception, he became devoted to the idea of the League of Nations. In politics men were coming to appreciate his brilliant qualities, his energy and perseverance, his kindly wit, his informed knowledge; but he lacked the crude ambition and the instinct of the marketplace, which swings smaller men to power. He was too candid, too generous, too clean

in method, to gain material success in a world where men give that they may take.

But his contribution to political life cannot be gauged in terms of office. He was the perfect Englishman, and he had the kindly faculty of at once making small men feel their little meannesses, and aspire, if only when his personal influence were touching them, to be a little more impersonal.

The influence of his personality abroad was perhaps greater than in England. At a time when fatuous demagogues had done so much to shatter the great structure of British prestige in the Near East, the character of Aubrey Herbert went far to maintain the old respect and confidence in English political integrity. I can remember, at the blackest crisis of the Kemalist War, a conversation which I held with a member of the Angora Government in a little Black Sea coast-town. The Kemalist's references to certain British politicians were as unkind as they were justified. I referred to Aubrey Herbert. The Kemalist smiled. "We still realise that Aubrey Herbert is the real England."

Herbert had hundreds of friends of all races and degrees of life, and he cannot have

had many enemies. He was a frail man, with an awkward stooping gait, and a manner as though always peering, which betrayed the weak sight he had through life. But his close-cropped iron-grey hair and deep ruddy colour declared the man of the sun and the rain. He had a pleasant boyish laugh, and a gentle friendly way with him. With all his achievement, he was one of the most modest of men. No man was too humble for his notice. He listened, sympathised, encouraged, inspired, gave of his simple measured wisdom. Those who knew him even little grew to love him, and in this life of snatching fighting, the memory of him must remain to all who loved him, to check, to urge, to comfort and to cheer.

September 27, 1923.

A VISION: THE LOST GARRISON

A RAINY day on Omagh—fitful rushing boisterous clouds with sudden whipping showers and occasional half-hourly splashes of the sun. Horrible, intolerable Irish weather, you may say, but if you love Nature as a mistress, you will smile at all her moods, as when she rains you kiss her tears and when she laughs you leisure in the sun.

Omagh is flagged to-day and decked with vivid streamers across her muddy High Street—black and blue and orange, they are dripping in the rain—"What we have, we hold," "We stand for King and Empire," "No surrender—1692," they read in glaring running capitals.

It is the anniversary of the siege of Derry, strangely celebrated by these violent historically-minded Ulstermen, yet a matter of some import once, which signified the triumph of Orange William, and may have affected to success the course of that dubious institution

—meet for modern explanation and apology, if not for actual and conscientious dissolution—that pirates' coup, the British Empire.

Under the streamers, in the long and wet and narrow cobbled street, in the early afternoon, they are forming column. They are marching in a ragged line—that great nuisance of to-day—the Protestants of Ulster. Lean, heavy-jowled, clean-shaven men with medals; middle-aged men, short and stout, with ruddy cheeks and fair moustaches; grey-beards and white-beards and stooping, gnarled and grizzled aged men; and little sturdy, red-faced boys. Sashes they wear of black and blue and orange with strange cabalistic signs of snakes and men and goats and ladders, letters and numerals; and banners on long poles they bear of silk emblazoned with weird hand-painted pictures—David and Goliath, William the Third equestrian, St. George and the Dragon, unfamiliar bearded frock-coated patriarch, “Old Splendid,” Duke of Abercorn.

They are slogging through the rain—stolid, tight-lipped, genial, taciturn; and at intervals their music, pipes blown studiously, and great drums beaten strenuously and passionately, proudly as if their drummers were enviable

men. And pleasantly rises the skirling of their bagpipes, that barbarian music out of the bog, the heather and the rain, laughed at contemptuously by the æsthetic and the cosmopolitan, not music but noise, crude and ridiculous, to be spurned alike against the surging sex of Wagner and the hectic smartness of the jazz; yet a music of the north, a music of once conquerors, the soul of that kicked thing, the British Empire.

Where are they marching along the muddy road, solemnly and ponderously and fixedly? You may laugh, you over-educated, you supercilious, you town-bred froth of things. The sign-post says, "TO THE ASYLUM." Past that sign-post—"To the Asylum"—their muddy hob-nailed boots go splashing into a wet and peaty meadow, bordered with rich green swaying trees, cut by a savage wind, needled with slicing rain, grim clouds looming over. Cheerfully, quickly, methodically, they roll the banners, for they are expensive banners, not meet for drenching, bought with the weekly threepences and sixpences of labouring men. Four men, particularly noticeable for their gaunt and bitter aspect, maimed and be-medalled, roll one banner,

bordered in black *crêpe*—"Thiepval 1916" it reads—so infinitely remote, remoter almost than this "Relief of Derry" they are celebrating. Silently, humorously, doggedly they mass round a dripping platform. Men are speaking from it: a little wizened man—"firebrand" in Belfast they call him—from Fermanagh; a big, bearded, deep-voiced Australian Ulsterman, earnest, distinguished, elderly, born not far from Omagh; a lithe, well-knit and vehement parson from right against the Border. "Loyalty," "Faith," "Justice," "Tradition," such obscure, old-fashioned words are coming from the platform. And the men are cheering, the women too, and little boys, and old women croaking unheard imprecations upon Gladstone—the men are cheering, these poor deluded, individual, self-reliant proletarians, un-class-conscious of Tyrone.

Two hours they wait and listen, stolid, quietly cheering, guffawing, sensible, approving gravely, before they file away; two thousand men who have spent a drenching afternoon, squelching, rheumatical and dripping, in a soaking meadow, to hear of a dead idea called Empire, and to sing an inartistic,

unæsthetic doggerel which runs, "God Save the King."

A remarkable, feudal, patriarchal, tribal, historical anachronism, in these days of moderation, toleration, "whine-don't-fight" enlightenment.

But as I swung out of Belfast Lough, calmly upon a shower-swept sea, I seemed to know all the beauty, the truth and the reality of that harsh land of Ulster. For miles the dockyards spread, vague clear-cut maze of steel and iron, under the low black hills, beneath a sky of fiery pink and burnished grey and dim leaden background of an undetermined night. Industry out of the mud-banks, fruitfulness out of the bogs, by the hand of persistent, constant, self-willed, dourly philosophic, grimly grinning men. Like a lost garrison they stand—the fading spirit of the British, in an Empire, sufficient in its knowledge, paltry in its luxury, and thieving in its poverty; the last of the men to hold those worn, unclever, crabbed and hard, unprofitable ideals, "Fear God and Honour the King."

August 1924.

OLD PLACES OF THE SOUTHERN SLAVS

ZAGREB is known to most as a point on the route of the Simplon-Orient, that magic institution which gives to commonplace voyagers fleeting glimpses into strange lands, and reminds Balkan politicians, pent in capitals of mud and dust, that every *wagon-lit* leads to Paris.

Zagreb is new and incomplete; a place of broad and shady streets, many handsome buildings, banks and institutions, theatres, cinemas and hotels; but here and there are big, barren patches and considerable rubbish heaps, where linger desultory hens and an occasional jaded goat. Rackety peasant carts mingle with the trams, and small congeries of amazed sheep obstruct the way of enthusiastically-driven autos. The Croats are proud of Zagreb, and compare it contemptuously with Belgrad, that battered block-house of the Serbs. The Croats love their railway-station, which they believe must have a

world importance in the sleepy eyes which look out on it for a few minutes on the way from Paris to Stambûl; they love their banks, their liqueur factory, their case factory, their furniture factory, and even their foul hotels. Zagreb is a fine town, and when you cannot get cigarettes in some hamlet of the Herçegovina, or when you are tortured by bugs in a Montenegrin hostel, your Croat chauffeur will with a wry smile drawl out in laboured German: "Hier ist nicht Zagreb." He will tell you, too, that you should stay in Zagreb a fortnight to gain a full appreciation of all its amenities and luxuries, and will think you a poor rustic fool when you say you have not heard the opera there. Withal Zagreb is a refreshing town, where man is well fed and willing to work—a young race, not given to luxury; and after the pinched and sallow misery of the Austrians and the triumphant vulgarity of *Schiebers* and tourists which haunt and affront the traveller in Vienna, it is good to see in Zagreb the broad shoulders and brown, cheerful faces of the Croats.

To the Croats Zagreb means the proud base of their young industrialism; to the weary

Western man, bound for long months in servitude to the gods of Pence, it means something infinitely more precious. To Zagreb you come in three days from London, and from Zagreb you come in a few hours into Bosnia. Bosnia has been described by Baedeker. Bosnia has Austrian roads and telegraphs and telephones, and Austrian hotels. But the Serb has saved it from the railway, and his dirty hands and the insects which follow his flag have stopped the filtering-in of tourists. And so Bosnia remains a secluded back-yard of the East—a forgotten garden of the Middle Ages—on the very borders of Italy and Switzerland: and its forests and its bugs, its waterfalls and smells, its castles and its filthy inns, still mock the world of guides and waiters. In Bosnia, the traveller, when he gets beyond the Zagreb-Belgrad railway and the weary narrow gauge which links that with Serajevo and Ragusa, must wander in mediæval style. And although he may have a motor for a pack-horse, he must lie in inns with tinkers, farmers and recruits, unless the lord of some old castle or the Trappist monks of Banjaluka will take compassion on him. But his nostrils will

inhale the first faint whiffs of that great and generous and uplifting Smell of the East whose bard is Mr. Kipling; that smell which the gods of Pence in the Great Temple of London do perpetually withhold from him; that most old, most glorious, most worthy smell, which is dirty men and dirty sheep and dirty goats and dirty dogs and dirty huts and dirty bugs, which is a burning sun and parching rocks, and ancient woods and rushing water and silent and still most stinking water, and coffee rich and sweet, and tobacco strong and pure, and women strong and beautiful and dirty. And he who wanders thus with his nose sniffing most gratefully, and his fingers scratching most comfortably, will come upon ruins of which he cannot buy coloured postcards, and he will tramp the sides of mountains, with much labour and perspiration, which would have been quite unnecessary if he had had the advantage of the guidance of one of the employees of Mr. Thomas Cook and his son. An old water-wheel is astride the lovely falls of Jaice, where sits all day a genial contemplative Turk who, after the manner of his most unenterprising and retrograde race, has not yet

roused himself to the possibilities of catering for visitors in "Jaice Rock" and caramels; and forty miles of scorching limestone protect the Bogumilian tombs of Stolac from the autographic penknives of transatlantic pilgrims.

There are two roads leading from Zagreb into Bosnia; one by Esseg to Banjaluka, the other by Karlovac and Bihač reaches Banjaluka from the south, passing through Krupa and Novi. Both roads run through long miles of flat, unattractive agricultural country, but travellers are rewarded who take the longer southern road, which, an hour after Karlovac, enters the silver-beech forests round Plinica lakes, and then crosses the Krain—the old Austro-Turkish borderland—to Bihač, and follows the beautiful valley of the Una to Krupa. From Zagreb to Banjaluka it is a two days' journey, and the traveller, if he has not met with the good fortune to be lodged by the hospitable owner of Ostrošac, may pass the night either at Plinica—where there is a clean, half-built hotel—or in the inn at Bihač.

Plinica is a lovely spot, which, when the railway comes nearer than Krupa and *wagon-*

Mts trundle their luxurious way down from Zagreb, may yet echo in its woods and grottos, the "jest larvelee" of feminine appreciation. Hills and islands of oak and beech edge and intersperse thirteen lakes of deepest blue. Here the traveller may bask all day in a glorious sun, lying in a boat paddled by a slim brown Croat boy, naked for all but a cloth; or he may wander round the shores discovering innumerable waterfalls and hidden grottos, where some misguided local busybody has already thought fit to plaster up apt quotations from Croatian poets.

From Plinivica the road leads up into forests of firs, and by a precipitous mountain road down to Petrovo Selo and Bihač. It is a savage, desolate country, a land of many legends of Hungarian and Turkish forays; where the wild things still abound, and bears and wolves in winter come right into the little straggling villages. A great change, too, in the people. At Karlovac there was a fair, where all the Croatian countryside was assembled, prosperous farmers in coloured leather jackets, felt trousers and black hard hats after the Hungarian style, with their

wives in clean, many-coloured blouses, full skirts and wide, high head-dresses. Over the mountains at Petrovo Selo the traveller might almost think himself in Anatolia. The men are tall and big-boned, thin and very brown, ragged, dishevelled, and many, Christians as well as Muslims, wearing the crimson turban of Turkish days.

Bihač might be a Turkish town; small white wood-tiled houses on piles among long reeds, overhanging the still river, cobbled streets of battered hovels, and here and there a little mosque. As we stopped to ask the way the *muezzin's* call drawled out through the evening air; a haze of flies drifted over a great garbage heap; a few ragged, turbaned men sat in a broken shed sipping coffee; a young Jew, the well-considered Jew of Muslim lands, with fez, check trousers and a cane, observed us with a lordly air; and the inevitable beggar wheezed out directions for the road we should not have taken.

The castle of Ostrošac is some long miles from Bihač, seen in the dark, a pale grey shadow against the sky. The road follows the valley of the Una, crosses a rattling bridge of planks, and curls five precipitous kilo

metres up the mountain which the castle tops. The castle gates stand at the end of a little crumbling hamlet, where half a dozen red-turbaned Muslims sit in the coffee-stall of Mehmed Bey, who, when he was young and the Sultan's writ ran to the Save, was the feudal lord of Ostrošac.

During the Austrian occupation the castle was purchased by a Croat official, who restored the exterior with artful taste. The existing walls are at least a thousand years old, and before the Turkish conquest the castle was a stronghold of the Counts of Blagai and a frontier *place d'armes* of the Bosnian kings. The family inhabits one wing, another is the stables; but the great area of the walled space is a mass of ruined stone-work, covered with undergrowth, a confusing place of broken towers, a keep, a dark well, and ominous great stone slabs, which lead to dungeons underground. Surprisingly there rises out of all this a great Roman tower, whose perfect brickwork has survived the rougher Bosnian stone-work so many centuries younger. The remains of a carved dragon, the head of which is yet perfect, tail in mouth, belt the tower.

To stand in the early morning sun among these bones of Roman and Mediæval chivalry, with the little silent broken Turkish hamlet alongside, and the lovely valley of the Una gleaming five or six hundred yards below; a sister mountain, brown scrub-covered, rising across the valley, and the peaks of others all round; a few straggling sheep and goats wandering down the bad hill-road, the only living things—is to think the race of man is dead, and these the last fast-disappearing signs of him.

In the morning we took the long road to Banjaluka, which as far as Krupa follows the valley of the Una—a broad, swift, shallow, rock-strewn stream, running between mountain sides covered with dwarf oak and beech. At Krupa, where the road crosses the Una, one of those uneasy plank bridges, which are everywhere in Bosnia, had collapsed to the extent of one-half of its breadth, and the entire population had taken holiday to watch four leisurely Serbs prising out rusty iron nails. We were told that we might wait two hours, which meant a long six, until the bridge was repaired or go round a distance of forty kilometres, whereupon our two dauntless

Croats, so to speak, taking the bridge by the planks, turned us out of the car and gingerly piloted it over the surviving portion of the structure to the great admiration of the men of Krupa.

From Krupa to Banjaluka the country is uninteresting, an agricultural region—maize-fields or sparse downs, where goats and sheep are met in small flocks. A very hot drive and uneventful—apart from the usual stampeding of horses and upsetting of light country carts which invariably occurs a dozen times a day. The peasant generally takes it all with surprising good nature, but the traveller would do well to beware of trouble in the event of running over a sheep-dog. The killing of these beasts is sometimes unavoidable, as three or four on a narrow mountain road will rush out at the car, which they seem to regard as some peculiar mammoth perpetually contemplating the destruction of sheep.

Banjaluka lies at the end of a great dusty plain and at the head of the valley of the Vrbas. It is the second town of Bosnia, and with Serajevo and Travnik replaced under the Turkish *régime* the old Bosnian centres

of Jaice and Brebir. Its site, like that of Serajevo, was obviously selected for military reasons as commanding the roads from Hungary and Croatia into Turkey. It possesses forty-five mosques, but is in itself an unattractive place, upon which lies heavily the stamp of Slav provincialism. Near by is a large Trappist monastery, formed by monks who came from the Rhineland in the last century.

After Ostrošac castle in the morning, to arrive at the monastery in the evening strikes again that strange note of mediævalism. The monks are everywhere—a brotherhood respected by Christians and Moslems alike for their great piety, their scientific farming and their incomparable beer.

Here in Banjaluka was the centre of the last stand of feudalism less than ninety years ago, when Hussain Agha Berberli, "Zmai Bosanski"—the "Dragon of Bosnia"—headed the Moslem landowners in a rising against the "European" reforms of the "Ghaiur Sultan" Mahmud II. It is curious that the dramatic career of this last upholder of feudalism has not aroused any of that interest which is associated with the name of the notorious

but comparatively prosaic "Lion of Janina" immortalised by Byron and Jokai.

Forty odd miles separate Banjaluka from Jaice—the ancient capital of the Bosnian kings. Jaice with its battered citadel perched above the town, its dank black catacombs and ancient church, which holds the pawky bones of the last weakling King Stefan Tomašević—flayed by the Turks and accursed of all Bosnians—its shambling streets of crumbling hovels, and the marvel of its white rushing falls, might be some lost city out of one of those magic fairy tales which Celtic and Semitic men were wont to weave in the Dark Ages and of which we sophisticated of the Age of Light have lost the fashion. Here you might think to find, sprawling and wheezing within the catacombs, some fat ogre of repulsion, half-dwarf, half-frog; a lorn princess sighing upon the castle walls; and some river god beneath the falls.

The road to Jaice runs through the sparkling, shallow, silver, rock-strewn, laughing valley of the Vrbas. We saw the Vrbas in the early morning before the sun had climbed over the mountain walls which hold it all along—here a rushing torrent between grim

cliffs of reddish rock which the road is tunnelled through; here wider and slower with deep woods of oak and beech and birch running down to drink it; and here, for a few hundred yards, broad and still with lush meadows before low cliffs on either bank. Goats and sheep were browsing there, and lads with their great white wolfish sheep dogs were already astir; and once we heard the gentle notes of a pipe and saw in the grass below three boys on their haunches round a new-made fire, the red of their flower-pot fezes and the gay stitchings of their jerkins a rich gleam of colour dancing in the green and grey about. The piping voice of Pan—and here the brown boy-god himself might be in last refuge, scowling out with angry eyes from behind some neighbouring oak, sickening with the smell of our car's petrol.

Jaice is a strange relic almost untouched since the fifteenth century by the hand of man; for the Turks made their capital in Bosna Serai or Travnik, and all the history of Jaice for six hundred years has been a few Turkish and Hungarian sieges. The skilled archæologist might find a rich treasure-ground in the old castle and the catacombs,

which the natives will tell you were built—and they were evidently used—by the heretical Bogumils, though they are certainly centuries older than the date when those perfervid precursors of the Reformation—and indeed of Communism—disturbed the alcoholic ease of the lords of feudal Slavdom.

Further, there is a tolerable hotel in Jaice, while the small brown bear, and different kinds of deer and lesser game in the surrounding forests, and the packed rivers of the Vrbas and Pliva, with the neighbouring lakes, afford good sport.

Beyond Jaice, as you turn south-east across the bridge over the Vrbas, you may take a rocky path the descent of which brings you level with the falls where the Pliva River, in a torrent sixty feet across, drops a sheer hundred into the Vrbas—a thunderous column of white water on which the sun flashes a thousand glistening slits of colour. All about the brown and green masses of the forest trees; and above to one side, the flimsy water-wheel where sits our afore-mentioned unenterprising Muslim; and behind in the distance, the battered ramparts, the ancient steeple and its rival minarets; while dumped around

like so many bee-hives, the white thatched hovels of the common living folk.

A mile away a large quarry and a works of some kind recall most gruesomely the Twentieth Century. The road leads on for many miles through mountainous wooded country, beautiful enough though the eye has been spoiled by the road to Jaice. We come at last in the early afternoon to Travnik, the later seat of the *Valis* of Bosnia, where they were scared away from Bosna Serai by the obstreperous Janissaries.

Travnik is a shabby, tumbling place of whitewashed hovels and an old grey citadel, ringed with wooded hills—a shoddy museum of the drab remains of officialdom departed of the Imperial Ottoman. There is a large Muslim ecclesiastical college fronted with coloured mosaics glittering in the dusty sun—very conservative and cool; and there is the *konak* of forgotten *Valis*, having the air of departed meretricious pomp and wealth in carved entrances leading to cool twilit courtyards, fronted with façades of chipped mosaic, and crumbling painted balconies; and an extensive Mussulman cemetery of stone-turbaned pillars, which give a grotesque

effect in the blue night as of the portly ghosts of many worthy *Kadis* and *Kaimakhams* come together in muttering, wheezing protest against the evil days which have brought the *ghiaur* with his wires on posts and his lines of iron laid along the ground.

The country between Travnik and Serajevo is undulating rather than hilly—a land thickly populated, of many small villages of white thatched cottages, of brown fields and low green orchards, and much to and fro along the roads of carts and sheep and goats and pack-horses.

Through this pleasant agricultural country we came towards the evening to the white houses and sparkling minarets and surly grey antique Vauban forts of Serajevo—piled up against a great blue line of hills, and lying at the end of a wide, dusty plain, which holds at an inconvenient distance from the city the racecourse and the railway-station.

Serajevo, lovely, battered and sinister, like a much-used woman, bears the marks of all her masters—Turkish walls and towers, Austrian forts upon the hills around, and now the trenches of the Serbs. For centuries the great base of the Turks upon the flank

of Hungary, her garrisons successfully guarded the road of invasion into the Balkans—second only in importance to that of Belgrad—the Morava Valley—or marched against the Habsburg arms across the Save. Later, in the last century, her native Janissaries and feudal *begs* used the great strength of her strategic emplacement to split the Turkish forces in Bosnia from reinforcements coming from Stambûl or Niš; and for years maintained a virtual independence—an oligarchic band of Muslim-Slavic lords and officers, more autocratic than the puling *Padishah*, more fanatic than all the race of Ulemas.

Serajevo is the most beautiful of all the Balkan cities. The Turkish town, a place of ragged lanes and crumbling walls and aged towers and sudden turnings, sprawls over a hill, running down into the modern quarter built by Austrians and Serbs. Fountains run in the silent, shaded courtyards of the mosques, where rags and prayers are still esteemed before tweeds and a tip; scabby donkeys and bedraggled, thin-shanked goats climb the cobbled lanes at ease from the trams of the new town; the things of Manchester and Wien and Pilsen have not yet altogether ousted from the bazaar the small brown bearskins

brought in from the hills, still blue and blood-dripping, the lace and spun stuff, the silver filigree and pottery and hand-wrought knife-hilts of the villages; and the eager newsboy of the café still gives place to the real whining, whimpering, chuckling, snarling, cursing beggar, an artist in his trade, who crawls on stumps short above the knee, and blackmails the fastidious with a great yellow throat of goitre, rotting cheek-bones and an oozing eye.

Even the new town, of musty chipped-fronted hotels, solid plain white flats and houses, and cheap shops with dirty plate-glass windows, has an agreeable park where the Christians love most immodestly in the pale blue dusk; and a hot promenade along the wide and shallow Miliaška—The Lovely. Here they will show you the bridge where the Habsburg drove over in his carriage that memorable summer's day, and the young and consumptive Serb fired hectically and hurriedly with a revolver, then jumped in panic over the low wall of the promenade, sixteen feet, on to the rocky bottom of the particularly parched and empty Miliaška.

The road from Serajevo to Mostar passes through a series of mountain ranges the

principal of which is the Belašica, and following from Konica the valley of the Narenta—here, near its source, a young and boisterous torrent—enters the narrow plain at the head of which stands Mostar. The memory of this road is one which the traveller, if he be slave to the gods of Pence, may carry through his life—a memory of joy and majesty that has given to his soul something which the things that bind him cannot take away. It is a scene of desolate and marvellous splendour. Nearly a hundred miles, with only a few straggling grey stone villages, and now and then a solitary hut along the road. The hand of man has made the road, for here first the Romans came and went from Dalmatia to Pannonia; and the hand of man has left the mournful crosses of the dour fanatic Bogumils. There is a scorching, glaring sun, and a sky of deep, hot, perpetual blue. And the road follows the swift, swirling, boulder-cumbered river—here along its rocky shore; here five hundred feet above, scratching along a great grey flank of limestone; here losing it to view behind a massive knife-like crag. All around are the mountains—bare, grey slopes with little patches of brown and green where a few bushes are scraping life; great towering

crag with strange shapes of heads and beards and knives; precipices rising straight from the river, a thousand feet or more, spotted with some black cave, and pouring down, in one place a trickling gleam of water, in another a narrow, flashing torrent.

Mostar lies at the end of this long road. It is a winding, narrow street of whitewashed houses, with flat roofs and many lattices, courtyards and balconies—half Latin, half Oriental—altogether and uniquely part of this strange land. Mostar is the hottest town in Europe, and has, they say, the same temperature as Jidda on the Red Sea; the Serb troops go in pith helmets and the Muslim ladies in queer black conical hoods. Mostar is an old fort of war and brigandage; ancient keep of the Slavonic Counts of Khulm, who took their toll on all goods coming up from Ragusa and the coast: later seat of many Turkish pashas, who thought to take advantage of its difficult and formidable strength to make themselves independent of the *Padishah*.

The wonder of Mostar is the ancient bridge which crosses the Narenta in a single graceful span—a pointed arch of old grey stone flanked by towers on either bank. The foundations

are alleged to be of Roman origin, but the existing structure is certainly Turkish. And Hajji Halfa, who wrote at the beginning of the seventeenth century, concerning Roumelia and Bosnia, tells of its building. "Since most of the gardens lie upon the further side of the river, a bridge suspended from chains led across to them; but as the pillars sank it swayed so much that the people feared for their life in crossing it. After the conquest, Sultan Suleiman, at the request of the inhabitants, sent Sinan, the architect, with orders to build a stone bridge. But this man, after he had seen the place, declared the task to be impossible. Later on, a carpenter who was himself living there, offered to make the attempt, and he built the bridge."

South of Mostar the road follows the Narenta valley, passing a mile away to the left the Falls of Buna, reputed to equal those of Jaice. It then turns due east over a rolling plateau of limestone boulders—a desert country of broiling sun and sparse green shrubs of the prickly sort, and they say a breeding-place of serpents. It is a bare and splendid waste—here a miserable group of huts eking round some fetid well; here

some tumbling forgotten tower or fort of past Turkish-Montenegrin wars, or of the Counts of Khulm or others longer before; here great rude crosses of ascetic Bogumils defying lords and priests in the free and open boulder-land.

We come in the early afternoon to Stolac, a considerable hamlet of rude whitewashed limestone huts, and a jagged lane leading up to the gate of an old castle—once the ancestral seat of the famous Ali Pasha Risbanbegović, a wily old rascal, after the kind of famous Simon Lovat of the '45, who in these parts fought for his own hand against the *Padishah*, not long after the worthier rebel of Banjaluka, Hussain afore-mentioned, had gone to ground.

From Stolac we came to Ljubinje, a large and prosperous village, with a grateful grove of trees, where we cooled, and drank Turkish coffee. The men of this part are notably different from the Bosnians, dark-eyed and black-haired in contrast to the frequent fair men of the north; and their dress is after the style of the Dalmatians and Montenegrins, little flat round caps like saucers inverted instead of the fezes and turbans of the north, and shorter jackets.

The Belašica Range between Serajevo and Mostar, which forms the watershed of streams flowing north to the Save and into the Danube, and of those flowing south into the Adriatic—it is, in fact, the Divide between the Pontic and Mediterranean river systems—seems also to separate the Nordic from the Mediterranean man. For these Hercegovinans and Dalmatians—and, for that matter, the Montenegrins—Slavs though they be in language and culture, are in colouring and physique distinctly of the Mediterranean. In fact it may be suspected that underneath there persists a strong strain of the Illyrian who, in Roman times, was the kind of man hereabouts.

After Ljubinje the limestone wilderness—with its poor patches of soil which the hard-lived peasants will travel a dozen miles to raise and tend their maize upon—opens upon the swampy plain of the Popovo Polje. This long thin strip of fertile soil between walls of limestone rock has been a cause of much strife in times heretofore; for these rich swampy patches are so rare in Hercegovina and Montenegro that men have gone on fighting intermittently since the beginning of history to grow their maize with ease upon it, and swell their paunches with malaria.

Further again into the rocky wilderness, while changing a burst tyre, we hear the sound of pipes and come upon a gay wedding party in a cave against the bed of a dried-up stream—strong well-favoured men, bigger than the Bosnians—with the daring eyes and ready smiles of those who know the wilderness—and great, strapping, comely girls.

In the gathering dusk—the orange, cherry, blue and purple haze of the wilderness—we see the empty Turkish forts of Trebinje on our left and turn south-west over an old great stone bridge towards the last range which hides the sea, and in half an hour we are swerving and twisting down the coast road towards the venerable city of Ragusa.

If Jaice is a piece of the fifteenth century, Ragusa is part of the seventeenth. The newest thing of Ragusa, except a few villas and a very excellent Austrian hotel, is the citadel restored and renovated by Marmont, Duc de Raguse, and Bonaparte's Governor of the Illyrian Provinces—whose cannon still peep out upon the azure waters of the ancient harbour, and the islet of pine trees where the sun-burnt citizens bathe away the easy summer days.

Our two Croat chauffeurs, who had made

nine hundred miles of mountain roads, with three burst tyres and innumerable punctures, in just about eight days, turned suddenly from grim and surly fellows into grinning cavaliers. For Ragusa is a gay place, with a spacious café and a cheerful band on a shady slope which overhangs the harbour. Here have taken refuge many of the more prosperous sort of Russians, who have filtered through from Constantinople with a few thousand dinars' worth of jewels. And there is joyous bathing all the day, and dancing and songs and drinking in a dozen cabarets late into the warm nights.

Ragusa is a delicious haven in which to lie hid from the gods of Pence, with all Bosnia and the Hercegovina behind to wander in, and the stark wilderness of Montenegro further south, and further yet, but only two days by car to Scutari, the welcoming forests of Albania. Meanwhile, in Ragusa, to rest and dream and bathe and read, and drink and dance; but the one Englishman we found was a very silent, self-contained and cynical old naval captain, living on his pension in great luxury.

August-September 1922.

INCIDENTAL WAYS

I. CRACOW OF THE POLES

CRACOW lies on the borderland between Europe and the vast plains which are really Asia. It has, indeed, a supreme geographical position. A hundred miles to the south rise the peaks of the High Tatra, the most formidable bastion of that Carpathian wall which has always been the defence of the European nations against the steppe-men. Within reach of Cracow, the Oder and the Vistula—the two great arteries of the North European plain—find their source. Thus Cracow has been the great military and commercial centre of the North-Eastern lands. Here Poland was made, and the rich Polish culture of the Middle Ages was developed.

A mile outside Cracow rises the great mound which is the grave of Krakaus, the legendary founder of the city. Over the isolated granite rock which rises out of the middle of Cracow are spread the red-brick walls and towers of the former Royal Castle,

containing the tombs and artistic relics of half a dozen dynasties—the worshipping-places of uncut stone used by early pagan rulers; the plain chapels, after the Norman fashion, of the first Christian kings, who in the tenth and eleventh centuries fought with Germans and Czechs for the possession of Silesia; the delicate balustrades and porticoes of Italian architects brought to Cracow by a Sforza princess; tawdry orthodox paintings to please a queen from Kiev; the marvellous realistic wood-carving of German craftsmen who came in the train of an Austrian archduchess; the pompous plaster-work of the Swedish Vasas; and a heavy, unspiritual black stone gilded mausoleum, wherein lies some noble henchman of the Habsburgs.

The effigies of two score or more of Poland's kings and prelates, hewn in red granite, stare with sightless gravity at the sombre arches of the Castle chapels—rough men mostly, wearied with wars against Tatars, Turks and Russians, Hungarians, Czechs and Germans. The sudden contrast to these grim faces, dogged or cynical, is the young loveliness of one woman, dead in childbirth, Louis of Anjou's daughter, Queen of Hungary and Poland, Grand Duchess of Lithuania. Here,

too, are the last heroes of Polish liberty, Poniatowski, Maréchal in Napoleon's Grande Armée, and Kosciusko, who, in stone effigy outside the castle walls, eternally salutes, with an air of fervent reverence, the bones of Poland's kings.

A quarter of a mile away, on the corner of the market-square, is the church of St. Mary, in the decoration of which the merchant-princes of Cracow tried to rival the splendour of the feudal nobles by gifts of great windows of stained glass, richer than jewellery, and costly mural carvings. A picturesque custom is maintained at St. Mary's. Each day at a fixed hour a bugle-call from the tower rings out to the four quarters of the city, and is suddenly cut short in the middle of the final note. The custom demonstrates that sense of historical theatricalism which the Poles share with the Magyars. For centuries it has commemorated an incident in the sack of Cracow by Batu Khan and a horde of Mongols (1243), when the trumpeter, sounding a call to arms, was shot in the throat by an arrow, and the last note finished in a gasp.

Cracow is the spiritual centre of Poland. Not in cosmopolitan Warsaw, which is Russian and French and German, but in Cracow may

be found the expression of the Polish nature. In Cracow, with its rich churches, its stately mansions, its broad market, its Drapers' Hall and old bazaar, its narrow streets and high walls and sudden turnings, we can see the Catholic Republic of the Middle Ages, whose armies were matched with the greatest of contemporary military powers, and whose merchants—great German and Italian families—controlled more than half the commerce which passed between Kiev and the Hansa towns, Vienna and Byzantium. Cracow is of the soul of Poland, fixed old in the threadbare glamour of tradition, ill taking the crude and cheapening, dun inspiration of the present; poor, passionate, heroic and slothful. In Cracow, the Polish city, they love well the memories, and they hate to learn; but turn their eyes, reverently, devotedly, to the brave red walls that resisted arrows.

January 1922.

2. THE BANAT OF TEMESVAR

In February, when the snows of the plains are beginning to melt, the Banat is not a pleasing country—a grey flatness blotched with black patches where the soil is showing,

grey skies and here and there, along the horizon, the black skeletons of stunted trees. To see this country well—as all the Danube lands—you must go in Summer, when the skies are hot and blue, when the plains are corn-yellow, and the straggling villages of white, green-shuttered cottages are glaring in the sun.

The Banat is a broad triangle of black soil, bounded by three navigable rivers—the Danube, the Tisza and the Marös; a rolling plain, rising in the east to wooded hills which are the first outposts of the Transylvanian Alps; the richest stretch of agricultural land in the whole of Central Europe. The Banat is essentially a new country. Its towns—Temesvar, Versecz, Szabadka—are big and rich and ugly; well-spaced with broad streets, and rather ragged public parks; built in the atrocious style of bastard Byzanto-Oriental architecture, which the Hungarians affect; shabby blocks of flats, gaudy shops *à la parisienne*, with plate-glass fronts. But for all its newness, it is a country with a long history. In Temesvar, a castle built by Matthias Corvinus or John Hunyadi—now most atrociously restored—recalls that for two centuries the Banat was the frontier-march of Hungary and Central Europe against

the Turk. Belgrad, Temesvar, Szeggeddin, were the three great fortresses that obstructed the way up the valley of the Danube, and round them were fought all the fiercest battles of the Middle Ages. One by one they fell to the Turks about the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Two hundred years later, when the Habsburg armies recovered it, the Banat had degenerated into a steppe, where a few thousand Kuman and Turkish shepherds grazed their herds. The Habsburg bureaucracy and the Hungarian nobility hastened to develop it, and to contest for its control. The magnates staked vast *latifundia*, and settled there Hungarians from the Little Alföld, Slovaks from the Northern Counties, Wallachs from Transylvania. The Habsburgs brought in thousands of wild Serbs from Turkish territory, French-speaking artisans from Lorraine, German Catholics from the Rhine. In Temesvar on a *fête-day* the town swarms with men of all these nationalities; prosperous German tradesmen in *papier mâché* bowlers and celluloid collars; Serbs, bundles of muddy rags in red felt boots and red head-cloths, turban-shaped rather after the Mussulman fashion; Wallachs, in sheep-

skin caps, high-collared jerkins and long overcoats, all of leather, richly sewn and beaded in reds and blues and greens; their women all in head-kerchiefs, and curious distended skirts of pretty shades of brown and mauve and pink.

The whole Banat is very illustrative of Austro-Hungarian rule: good roads, canals, scientific agriculture, excellent administration; but encouragement of petty national rivalries and complete lack of moral responsibility in their relation with the people. The Banat is now divided; the rough honest hand of the Serb has been laid on Szabadka and the western half; in Temesvar Roumanian officials sit all day drinking cheap wines and playing dominoes in the cafés. Roumanian officers parade the streets in full glory of monocles, fur pelisses, patent leather riding boots, and elegant corsage. Meanwhile, as in Transylvania and in the plain east of the Tisza, the railways have almost ceased to function, the canals are falling into disrepair, agriculture has declined. There has, in fact, developed a new aspect of the racial question in Eastern Europe, the results of which can scarcely have been foreseen by the perfervid advocates of Self-Determination *ad absurdum*.

February 1922.

3. COMMISSION'S PARADISE

Sofia consists of the usual agglomeration of ill-assorted architecture which goes to make up an East European city—Russian churches, German offices, and French hotels. But it is perhaps the most primitive of all the Balkan capitals. Fifty years ago it was a little Turkish garrison-town—the base in '77 of Suleiman Pasha's army which was driven into the Rhodopé by Gurko, after Valentine Baker's brilliant rearguard action at Tashkessen. Now the Turkish town is only seen in the remains of a few walls and a guard-house. There is a Palace and banks, hotels, and restaurants straggling along a couple of broad streets, but in the best hotel in the main square you may waken in the morning to hear a dozen cock-crows, and later in the day you may see the main street blackened more than once by a dense flight of rooks. In ten minutes' drive the macadamised streets run into tracks ankle-deep in liquid mud, and peasant huts, alive with pigs and poultry, are scattered round the last ugly yellow villas of the residential quarter. Beyond are woods, rising to snow-capped hills.

Everywhere are peasants, coming and going,

with their poultry, eggs and pigs, between the country and the town. They ride in rough carts, or on quick, sturdy little ponies, mounted on top of a pile of miscellaneous possessions. Well-built, swarthy fellows, but infinitely dirty, dressed in dark, sombre rags, grey pointed hoods, or old head-kerchiefs, and thick grey woollen gaiters. To the stranger, they seem men of a sullen, moody nature, with a passive, enduring look, as though leading lives of want and hardship. Very different men, these, from the cheerful, lazy labourers of Poland or the Banat, with their hard drinking and their gay clothes.

Most conspicuous in Sofia to-day and most interesting to a depressed and impoverished public, is the Reparations Commission. Gigantic in its size, splendid in its appurtenances, it comes and goes in a cheerful flare of flags and a rousing blare of motor-horns—the lord of poor Sofia.

In the hotels you see it eating largely right through the afternoon—a prosperous atmosphere of fur coats and handsome uniforms, the latest Paris modes, unobtainable French wines, and still more unobtainable Havana cigars. After the broken streets, the dank villas, the ragged clothes, and sullen faces, it

is very nice to enter the Union Palace and to revive one's memories of good living. The Bulgars say little, but they tell you that the Commission costs them many scores of millions of *levas* every year, and they ask what it does which could not be accomplished equally efficiently by an extra attaché at each Legation. "C'est très trop," as an English friend of mine observed with sympathy.

February 1922.

4. THE OLDEST WAR

There is an ease of permanence about this Moorish war, which has lingered on so many centuries over the mountains stretching back and along on either side the Pillars of Hercules. It has had its stirring days, when the furore of new Islam swung the Arabs into Spain, or when the Kings of Castile, with energy more Gothic than Iberian, swung them out again—and threw after them the progenitors of these same Jews who now infest in sordid gaberdines the alleys of all the tumbling coast-towns.

Otherwise, such war has dragged on always, desultory and indolent, over the mountains green and white in lentiscus, over the scorching

ruddy flats, down to the blue waters, around the ageing walls of Ceuta and Melilla, Tetuan and Sheshawan; not even tragic to men who love to titillate with a little shedding blood the torpor of their souls; nor yet ridiculous to men who alternate their change of shots with an exchange of gold.

Watch the leisurely course of this Riffian war, in Algeciras, where, under the shadow of the Rock, ugly symbol of incomprehensible efficiency, they are dangling from a rusty crane some scraggy, kicking horses into a rotting lighter. Roll easily across the Straits to the white city of Tangier, in that noble, ornate and odorous barque the *General F. Sylvestre*; contemplate the changing complexions of three officers of Spain, from unshaven yellow, through moist and quivering white to an unearthly green; move your overcoat, and, wondering that Iberians, even in search of El Dorado, should have traversed the horrible Atlantic, take to heart this truth—that Sea-Power goes not with syrup and liqueurs.

Take that reddish track of holes and mounds and ruts, which is the Spanish military road, running from the International Zone, to Tetuan, north to Ceuta and south to Shesha-

wan. It sprawls and twists through the wet lentiscus-covered hills, where feed the goats, same colour as the road, the bony sheep and in-bred cattle of these parts—a most important and significant road, for it is the great symbol, the one fact of the Spanish occupation; it is, indeed, the end and the beginning of that one gage of the pride of palsied Spain—the Moroccan Protectorate by the grace of crude, aggressive Abdul Krim, and temporarily tranquillized but doubtful pensioner, Raisuli.

Come to Tetuan, aged, battered town, set in olive-groves, cemeteries and gardens, on the incline of a hill, with under it a parched red flat stretching to the sea, and eastward, sinister black mountain, precarious white block-houses a-top watching the turgid Rif.

There is the Spanish town of shops and barracks and cafés, a hideous railway-station in the bastard Moorish style, and a luxurious hotel for the more adventurous kind of tourist, and the most adventurous kind of Spanish officer. And above, behind, is packed the Moorish town, a tight and squalid place of stone mosques and palaces, mud huts and wooden booths, of winding lanes and reeking alleys to hold all the stinking beggars, the shouting muleteers, festering mules and

donkeys, the scurvy dogs and scabrous *gamins* of a Muslim town.

Here you find some broken mosque, roofed with wondrous green tiles and plastered with delicate mosaics and woodwork of the greater days: here again is the shaded courtyard of the Khalifa's palace—some fat, white-robed courtiers lounging round; a grinning negro soldier; and sleeping in the sun, two hirsute boars: and here rides a Moorish squire, from the Rif maybe, or wealthy merchant on cream trotting mule, harnessed in red leather.

The road leads on by the sea to Ceuta, and along it is much coming and going of the Spanish Army, Guardia Civile in pairs, every few hundred yards—men shaved and well set on sturdy horses, carbines slung at the hip; and columns of soldiers on mule-pack, singing mournfully and serious-faced, looking, in their dirty blue, and red forage-caps, like etchings of Meissonier. They seldom have an officer on this road, drenched and parched alternately, and those who know them well say that they lack confidence. Pass two convoys of mules carrying from Ceuta to Tetuan cases marked "Moët et Chandon," and see the cafés of Ceuta thronging with their officers, gorgeous, spurred, combed and polished, and

you remember again that these boys lack confidence.

Ceuta, cool and fresh, juts into the sea, a hilly peninsula, with the white houses and old walls of the castle piled against it. Ceuta is a much-fought place of the perpetual Moorish war, now certainly secure, but once sieged languidly by the Moors for twenty-seven years. Within the harbour lie the ships of war of his Most Catholic Majesty, and visible to all is the rust upon the sides and the grey paint peeling off. A pathetic fleet is this, whose units occasionally undertake some cruise, to founder, not infrequently, upon the inhospitable rocks of the Riffian coast.

And so the War wags on, and of all the glory that was conquering, building Spain, remains these few unwanted coast-towns of the Rif, and some torrid fishing stations down the tropic coast, not worth the keeping. In the Ceuta cafés you may laugh at *opéra bouffe*, but the last dried bones of Empire are no happy things to ponder.

March 1924.

THE OPERATIONS OF THE ALLIES IN THE CAUCASUS, 1853-5

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1. *The Russian Position in the Caucasus*, 1853.—To obtain an accurate perspective of the strategy of the Allies in the Caucasus during the Crimean War, a brief review is necessary of the history of the Russian absorption of those regions.

The Caucasus mountain system extends for a distance of 650 miles in a S.E. direction from the Taman Peninsula on the Sea of Azov to

the neighbourhood of Baku on the Caspian. It may be divided into three sectors: a Western Sector, from Taman to Pitsunda, forming the difficult coast of Circassia and Abkhasia; a Central Sector of impassable mountain wall, through which the Pass of Darial—Dar-i-Alan, or Gate of the Alans—alone gives access from the north to the south; and an Eastern Sector comprising the hills of Chechnia and Daghestan, which stretch to within two miles of the Caspian, leaving a narrow coastal strip, the historical Gap of Derbend, which gives easy passage from the Steppe to the valley of the Kur.

During the first three decades of the nineteenth century the Russians, based on the Cossack Line, which followed, roughly, the courses of the Terek and the Kuban, had pushed into Transcaucasia by the two Gaps of Darial and Derbend. Leaving the difficult mountain regions on either flank unattacked, they had conquered the fertile valleys of the Rion and Kur, and fixed their outposts on the rims of the Iranian and Armenian Plateaux. Finally in 1827 the Persians had surrendered Erivan and Nakhichevan, and, the following year, the Turks had lost Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki.

For half a century the Russians had been fighting with the mountaineers, but it was not until 1830, when Transcaucasia had been finally conquered and was in process of organisation as a Russian province, that they undertook a campaign definitely aimed at their final submission. On the outbreak of the Crimean War the struggle between the Russians and the mountaineers had already endured for nearly a quarter of a century with but little permanent success to the invaders. The Russians had during that period effectually reduced the Kabards and Ossets of the Central Caucasus, and the Tatar Khans of the Caspian littoral. But, on the east, the Chechen and Daghestanli tribes had resisted several formidable invasions, culminating, in 1845, in the severe defeat of 10,000 Russian troops at Dargo in Chechnia, with a loss of half their number in killed. In the following year, Shamil, the celebrated *Imam*, or religious head of the Mussulman tribes, had threatened Temir-Khan-Shura, Kisliar and Grozni, and had made a lightning cavalry raid into the Kabardan country, which had momentarily imperilled communications between Vladikavkas and Tiflis.

After Dargo the Russians made no further

attempt to reduce the tribes by open warfare, but confined themselves to blockading tactics. On the north, they gradually pushed the Cossack line further into Chechnia; on the south, they built a line of forts to prevent Shamil from breaking into the valleys of the Alazan and Jora.

Among the Western tribes, chief of which were the various Cherkess clans, a parallel struggle against the Russians was in progress, but the area was more isolated, and the tribes, being in a less favourable position to threaten Russian communications with Transcaucasia, were not attacked with such vigour. Here again the Russians pursued the blockade system, by building forts on all the accessible points along the Black Sea coast, thus severing the tribes from all direct communication with the Turks, upon whose commerce the former prosperity of the coastal tribes had always depended.

Thus, when in the summer of 1853 war between Russia and Turkey became imminent, a number of dangerous eventualities arose. Russian rule in the Caucasus was scarcely twenty-five years old, and the Russian administration had reason to fear the revival of all the racial and religious hatreds of the hetero-

geneous and barbarous populations under their control.

In South-Western Georgia a Turkish invasion might raise a rebellion among the Mussulman populations of the recently-conquered province of Akhaltsikh, and a combination of the Mussulman tribes of the south-west and the Turks with Shamil could threaten Tiflis. In the east, an attempt by Persia to invade the sympathetic Mussulman Tatar districts, ceded to Russia in 1827, was to be expected.

2. *Russo-Turkish Campaign of 1853.*—In the summer of 1853 Muhammad Emin, the leader of the Cherkess tribes and the official *Naïb*, or representative of Shamil in the west, repaired to Constantinople to concert measures with the Porte; while, in August, Shamil invaded the districts of Djaro and Bielokani, bordering on Kakhetia and the upper-Alazan.

On October 5th war between Russia and Turkey was declared. About 40,000 Turkish troops were concentrated at Ardaghan and Kars, under the command of Ali Pasha and Ahmad Pasha; another 30,000, already decimated by fever generated in the unhealthy climate of the Black Sea littoral, were stationed at Batum under the command of Abdi Pasha. To oppose these, the Russian

commander, Count Vorontsov, could not dispose of more than 20,000 men and a few thousand Georgian militiamen.

The Turks immediately commenced a double offensive along the Mingrelian coast, and into the Mussulman districts round Akhaltsikh. On October 28th Abdi Pasha drove the Russians from the frontier-post of Shakvatil (Nikholævsk) and, after an action at Beyendir (November 3rd), occupied Redut-Kale. But against Akhaltsikh the Turks were less fortunate. During November Ali Pasha was defeated successively in actions near Akhaltsikh, Akhal-kalaki and Atskhur, and fell back on Ardaghan with a loss of twelve field-pieces. Finally, on November 19th the Turks, 37,000 strong, were severely defeated by an inferior Russian force of 10,000 men, under Prince Bebutov, at Bash-Kadiklyar, a village on the road from Alexandropol to Kars. A fortnight earlier (November 3rd) the Russians had destroyed a Turkish squadron at Sinope, and secured temporary command of the Black Sea, thus cutting communication from Constantinople to Batum and Trebizond, the supply-depots of the Turkish armies. The Russian forces in Transcaucasia were, however, too weak to pursue their advantage, and the intervention of the Franco-

British Fleet soon invalidated Russian supremacy at sea.

3. *The Circassian Expedition and the Russo-Turkish Campaign of 1854.*—At the end of March, 1854, Great Britain and France joined in the war against Russia; while measures were taken to assist the Turkish armies in Bulgaria, a combined Franco-British fleet under Admirals Hamelin and Dundas began a blockade of the South Russian ports. The Turkish Government now considered the moment opportune to open an offensive against the Russians in the Caucasus, and proposals were made for an expedition to the Circassian coast. A Turko-Egyptian fleet, under Admirals Ahmad Pasha and Hassan Pasha, received on board at Constantinople a large number of Cherkess *émigrés*, including Sefir Pasha, of Anapa, and Behchit Pasha. The plan of action was that the Turko-Egyptian fleet should unite with an Anglo-French squadron off the Circassian coast, and, having occupied the Russian forts from Anapa to Sukhum Kale, land the *émigré* leaders together with a large supply of arms and ammunition. It was hoped thus to revive the fighting spirit of the western tribes, and that their later actions would react favourably

on the situation in Daghestan and the Transcaucasus.

The Turks, however, were alone in advocating the expedition. The British Government was intent on restricting or destroying Russian naval power in the Black Sea, and failed to realise the importance of the Asiatic front, and the political results of the possible expulsion of the Russians from the Caucasus. The French Government had little interest in the situation in the Caucasus; to Napoleon III the war was merely a question of religious prestige, and of vindicating the diplomatic defeats suffered by France, fifteen years before, in the suppression of Muhammad Ali of Egypt. Hence, while the Allied admirals were delaying the Turko-Egyptian fleet at Kavarna during all May, the commander of the small Allied squadron despatched to reconnoitre the Circassian coast, arrived at Varna with an unfavourable report as to the temper of the tribes, and as to the possibility of organising them into an effective fighting force.

The preparations for the Crimean campaign were already beginning to engage the energies of the Allies, and further operations on the Circassian coast were definitely vetoed. The

Turkish fleet, acting independently, paid a hurried visit to the Circassian coast, where they landed the *émigré* pashas and a small proportion of the stores originally intended for the tribes. These latter, among whom a naval demonstration in force would have raised immeasurable enthusiasm, were bitterly disappointed, and received the Turkish *protégés* with scant welcome. Sefir at Tuapse found that the fame of his former deeds was forgotten, and that a younger generation of *naïbs* were jealous of him: Behchit at Sukhum became involved in difficulties with Prince Michael Shahvashidze, the chief landowner in Abkhasia, and antagonistic Mussulman and Christian parties, equally hostile to Turks, Russians and to each other, were soon formed.

The Cherkess expedition had proved abortive, but the situation of the Russians remained precarious. In April, General Read, temporary Viceroy of the Caucasus, fearing a Persian attack, had proposed the evacuation of all territory beyond the Sulak, a measure subsequently vetoed by the new viceroy and commander-in-chief, Muraviev. And in September all danger of Persian intervention was averted by a secret convention which purchased neutrality by relieving the Shah of

the obligation of paying the balance of the indemnity promised to Russia in 1828.

In May, Selim Pasha, the new commandant of Batum, whose malaria-stricken forces had been reinforced by a Tunisian contingent and by two battalions of Georgian and Polish deserters, advanced from Chorokh-Su against Ozurgeti, the capital of Guria and a Russian garrison town on the road to Kutais. A few weeks later Shamil descended from Daghestan into the valley of the Alazan. Selim, however, fell into an ambush, and was defeated, with a loss of fourteen guns, by a greatly inferior force under Prince Andronikov (June 4th).

A month later (July 3rd) Shamil was routed at Shildi in Kakhetia, by a local force under Prince Chavchavadze. He retired into the hills and, during the rest of the war, failed to make any attempt to co-operate further with the Turks.

Meanwhile a new commander, Zarif Mustafa Pasha, had been reorganising the Turkish army at Kars, demoralised by the defeats of 1853, and by want and neglect. Fifty men a day were dying in the hospital at Kars. Nevertheless, reinforcements were continually arriving, and by the late summer the Turks could put 50,000 men in the field. A Russian

force under Bebutov, 18,000 strong, advancing from Alexandropol was brought to action at Kuriuk-dar, twenty miles N.E. of Kars. The Turks were defeated, but the Russians were too weak to advance. In September, the Russian occupation of Bayazid, on the main road from Erzurum to Tabriz, closed the campaign for the year. The Turks, in greatly superior numbers and in command of the sea, had failed to gain a single advantage, and their troops, both in Mingrelia and at Kars, were being decimated by disease. The Russians had succeeded in checking both Shamil and the Turks, but they were too weak to pursue any advantages.

4. *The Kars and Ingur Campaigns, 1855.*—The summer of 1855, which saw the most difficult phase of the Crimean Campaign, found the Turkish Asiatic Army in a desperate condition. The difficulties of supply, ordinarily serious enough, were accentuated by the proverbial incompetence and dishonesty of the Turkish officers, who were more interested in personal intrigues than in their respective duties. Consequently the Turkish Armies, both along the Mingrelian coast and in Kars, were in want of every necessary and suffering from malaria, cholera and famine. The situa-

tion was further aggravated by the differences of the Porte, of the Seraskier Omar Pasha, and of the Allied Commanders as regards war policy. The best Turkish troops had been transferred from the Balkans to the Crimea, where, in position at Eupatoria, they watched the road from Perekop to Sevastopol and threatened the Russian rear. Omar wished to transfer these troops to the Asiatic front, where they might have had a decisive influence, while the Allied Commanders insisted on their remaining in the Crimea. There was also, on all fronts, friction between the Allied and the Turkish general officers. Many of the latter were renegade Hungarian or Polish officers, who resented the assumed superiority of the French and British. This position was particularly marked at Kars, where Ismail Pasha, the Chief-of-Staff, was a Hungarian (Kmety), while Arslan and Shakhin Pashas were Poles (Generals Bystrzonski and Brianski). On the other hand, the British High Commissioner, Major-General Fenwick Williams, a most excellent and courageous officer, was both tactless and short-tempered, and while he failed to overlook certain venial peculations of officers whose pay was some months in arrears, he listened to all the malicious

canards of his Armenian and Greek clerical staff.¹ The Turkish failure at Bash-Kadiklyar in the previous September has been attributed to the strained relations between the British and Turkish officers; and at the beginning of 1855, Zarif Mustafa, together with his two *feriks*, Hussain and Shukri, had been recalled at the request of the Commissioner, and Wassif Pasha had assumed command at Kars.

Thus with a faulty supply, and a divided Command, the Turkish Army was in no state to assume the offensive against the Russians. For an offensive against Transcaucasia, Kars was an excellent advance base, threatening the communications from Tiflis to Alexandropol and Erivan. But as the camp of an army, acting on the defensive, it was untenable, and its defence by the whole army was a cardinal blunder. It was situated in a barren country, incapable of supporting a large number of men during a long period, and distant 100 miles from the nearest base, Erzurum, and 300 miles from the nearest port, Trebizond.

The correct strategy of the Turkish Command was a withdrawal of the main army to

¹ Slade, "Turkey and the Crimean War," p. 415.

the line of the Sughanli Dagħ—covering the roads converging at Erzurum from Kars and Bayazid—and the evacuation or temporary defence by a small force of Kars. Kars forms only an outpost of the mountainous system on which the defence of Anatolia should be based, while the Sughanli Dagħ is the key position to Erzurum. The above was the strategy successfully adopted by Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha in 1877, and disastrously neglected by him in 1878. Kars was, however, retained as the base of the Turkish field-army, in opposition, it is said, to the plans of the Turkish staff, and at the instance of the British Commissioner, who received support from Constantinople. 15,000 infantry, 2,500 cavalry, fourteen batteries and 70 siege-guns were shut up in Kars, while a further 10,000 men were scattered between Erzurum, Keupri-Keui and Hassan-Kale.

In June, 1855, Muraviev moved across the Arpa Chai (Barley River) with about 20,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry and ten batteries. He appeared before Kars on the 16th, while his cavalry swept as far as Yeni-Keui, fifty miles on the road to Erzurum, and captured a depot containing six weeks' supply for the Turkish army. He proceeded to invest Kars with half

the forces at his disposal, whilst he drove the weak Turkish detachments from the Sughanli Dagħ (Onion Mountains) and advanced to Hassan-Kale, eighteen miles from Erzurum.

On July 17th, Omar at Eupatoria, having failed to persuade the Allied Commanders to sanction the departure of his troops to Asia Minor, departed to Constantinople on his own initiative to discuss the situation at Kars and to formulate plans for relief. In the meantime shortage of forage had again caused the evacuation of Kars to be discussed, but the suggestion was vetoed both by the Commissioner and by Wassif, who was further encouraged by a letter from Omar promising relief in twenty days. Omar might either have attempted relief by a landing at Trebizond and a march to Erzurum and Kars, or by a blow at the Russian communications by landing on the Mingrelian coast and marching on Kutais and Tiflis. The bad state of the road from Trebizond to Erzurum and the scarcity of supplies in Armenia induced him to choose the bolder alternative, "to strike the serpent at the tail, so that the head will recoil."

On September 21st, Omar Pasha arrived off Batum and Redut Kale, where he began to reorganise the malaria-stricken forces of

Mustafa Pasha, and to prepare the arrival of the divisions from Rumelia and the Crimea.

The news of Omar's arrival on the Mingrelian coast and of the fall of Sevastopol (September 8th) reached Muraviev in the second week of September, and he determined by a bold move to anticipate Omar's relief and to make some attempt to re-establish Russian military prestige, by a sudden storming of Kars.

On the night of September 28th the Russians made a surprise attack on the Tahmasp heights to the east of Kars. A sanguinary struggle for the possession of the heights endured seven hours, at the end of which the Russians were repulsed with an estimated loss of over 7000 killed. The repulse was disastrous to the whole Russian position in Asia. "There he (Muraviev) stood, with a shattered army, the fortress he was bent on taking intact before him, its defenders refreshed by victory, and the *élite* of the Turkish armies gathering in his rear."

The Russians retired to Chivili, leaving a small force at Ainali, and for a few days the siege of Kars was raised. But Wassif was too weak to pursue his victory, while the Mingrelian defensive was unduly delayed.

Omar, an old Croat renegade from the Austrian army, had received his training in Turkey, mostly in block-house operations against the Montenegrins, and was not the man to press a swift advance, while Mustafa at Batum proved utterly incapable. Omar, who had decided to advance from Sukhum, which offered a better base than Redut Kale, spent six valuable weeks in ineffectual preparations, and in empty intrigues with Behchit, with Muhammad Emin and with the princes of Abkhasia and Mingrelia, whom he wished to compromise with the Russians.

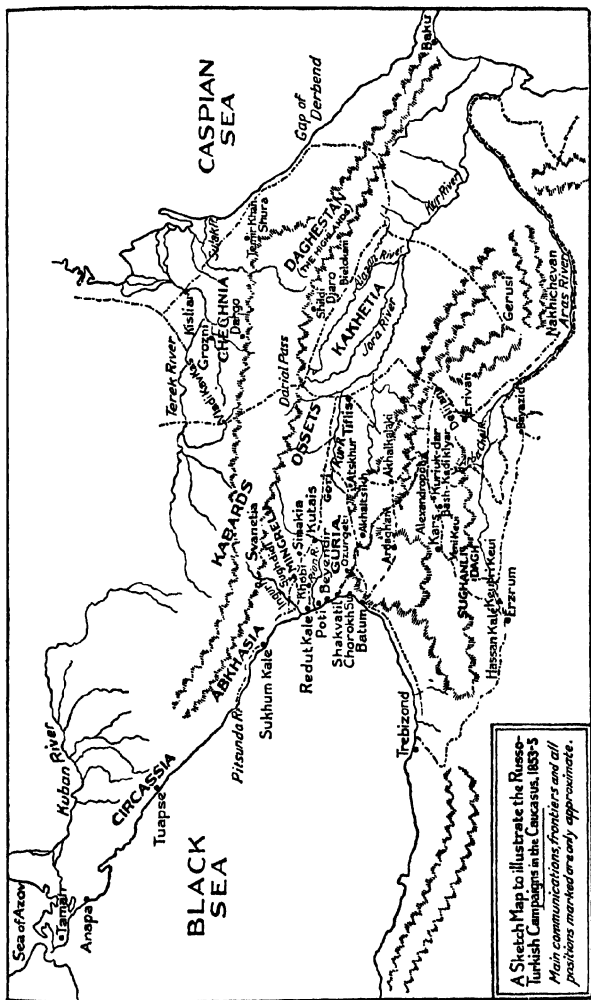
Meanwhile Muraviev, with diminished forces and leaving Transcaucasia practically without defence, had re-established the investment of Kars, whose garrison was in the last straits of famine.

At last, in the first week of November, Omar, with about 20,000 men, including four battalions of Turkish Rifles commanded by British officers, began a leisurely advance from Sukhum. He outflanked and defeated a small Russian force near the ancient castle of Rukhi on the Ingur, and on November 21st occupied Sughdidi, seat of the Dadians of Mingrelia. The Dadian, a minor, had fled to the mountainous district of Svanetia, in charge

of his mother and uncles, and the Turks found the town and villages utterly deserted by the inhabitants, in fear of Omar's Abkhasian irregulars. Omar still intrigued for a Georgian revolt, but the cautious Dadianie merely sent her favourite, a French archæologist, to watch her interests in the Turkish camp. Omar continued to advance slowly across the swampy Mingrelian plain, which is intersected by numerous streams, making progress difficult. On November 21st he reached the Tshkanis-Khali, and his outposts entered Sinakia, the second town of Mingrelia, while to the east he established communication with Redut Kale.

On November 26th Kars at last capitulated to Muraviev—"the garrison being on the verge of inanition," with 70 position guns, 84 field-pieces and 24,000 stands of arms. The news reached Omar three days later with the first of the autumn floods. He immediately retired to Khopi, and proceeded to canton his troops at Redut Kale. In the following summer the Treaty of Paris restored the territorial *status quo* in Asia Minor and tacitly confirmed the Russian annexation of the Caucasus.

From a contemporary point of view, the Asiatic Campaigns of 1853-6 demonstrated,



on the part of the Allied Command, both lack of political imagination and of strategic conception. It was due principally to the individualist policy of Napoleon III that the Allies completely neglected the Asiatic front, and confined themselves to the temporary solution of the questions involved in Russian ambition in the Balkans and the Black Sea-Mediterranean. From the British point of view, it was a grave strategic mistake to have neglected the opportunity of expelling the Russians from the Caucasus—a consummation which might have been possible had a double offensive been made against Tiflis from Kars and Sukhum, and had a landing in the Kuban followed the Allied occupation of the Sea of Azov in May 1855.

It is interesting to speculate as to the results of a withdrawal of the Russians to the line of the Terek and the Kuban by the Treaty of Paris. Their aggressive imperial policy in Central Asia and Persia might have been hindered if not interrupted. On the other hand, the effects in the Georgian principalities and on the future economic development of Transcaucasia might have been disastrous. For no stable elements existed in the Caucasus on which to build a State, and even had the

Allies stipulated for the independence of the Transcaucasian peoples, Turkey and Persia would inevitably have established their hegemony in the western and eastern areas, and the old triangular struggle between Russia and the two Mussulman Powers must eventually have been renewed.

THE SERBO-TURKISH CAMPAIGN OF 1876

Introductory Note.—Some apology is necessary in recalling the obscure campaign in Serbia which preceded the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8. Every campaign possesses, however, a certain historical and geographical interest, and it is a curious fact that, in spite of the place which is occupied in military reference books by the Russo-Turkish campaigns, no coherent record apparently exists in English of the lesser operations of that period. The following account has been collected principally from the very excellent despatches in current numbers of *The Times*, from a series of Reports from the British Military Attaché at Constantinople and from H.B.M. Consuls, published in Parliamentary Papers 1875-7, and from one or two volumes of reminiscences.

In the autumn of 1875 an insurrection broke out in the Hercegovina, and provoked the

prolonged diplomatic crisis which terminated in the Russian declaration of war on Turkey in the spring of 1877. The principal incidents of this crisis were the Andrassy Note and the Berlin Memorandum, which revealed the understanding on Near Eastern policy of the Three Emperors; the "Bulgarian Massacres," which evoked the veteran ire of Mr. Gladstone; the palace-revolutions, which produced the ephemeral Constitution and Parliament of Midhat Pasha, and preceded the despotism of Abdul Hamid; and finally the abortive Conference of Constantinople, at which Lord Salisbury was unsuccessful in preventing the war which resulted eventually in the dissolution of the Turkish Empire in Europe.

In the summer of 1876 the Principalities of Serbia and Montenegro, supported by Russian diplomacy, attempted to intervene in the Hercegovinian insurrection. The intervention, in fact, represented the first actual consummation of Russian efforts to create a Balkan *bloc*, and the ambitious strategy, which it comprehended, demonstrated that both the Russian Government and its Balkan Allies had under-estimated the still potent military capacity of an Empire which was already in an advanced state of administrative disinte-

gration. The Serbs were disastrously defeated, and the Montenegrins, after a few minor successes and one victory in the field, were forced to withdraw within their own border and to withstand a Turkish invasion of the Zeta valley. The campaign of the summer of 1876 was in all respects a preliminary trial of strength in which the Turks secured immediate advantages and acquired confidence, and by which the Russians discovered that they must prepare to encounter no mean antagonist.

The operations between Turks and Montenegrins are of little military interest, since the Montenegrins and the Hercegovinian insurgents were scarcely more than formidable *guerrilleros* with the advantage of a difficult country. But the operations in Serbia have the interest of a regular campaign, fought in a country which had never before been the scene of a modern war.

1. *The Serbian Offensive, July–August, 1876.*—The southern frontier of Serbia in 1876 followed the line of the Jastrebac mountains, to the source of the Timok, whence it turned due north, along the line of the Stara Planina Hills. The Stara Planina and the lower stream of the Timok, below Saičar, constituted the eastern frontier, then between Serbia and

Turkey, later between Serbia and Bulgaria. On the south the Serbian fortress of Aleksinac protected the wide valley of the Morava, while thirty miles to the south-east the Turkish garrison-town of Niš, below the junction of the Morava and the Nišava, covered the roads south by Leskovac and Kumanovo to Üsküb, and east by Pirot to Sofia.

On the east, the Serbian fortified towns of Saičar and Kniaševac protected the line of the Timok, while the Turkish fortress of Vidin, in the angle of the Danube and the Timok, covered north-western Bulgaria.

War broke out between Turkey and the two Slav Principalities during the first week of July. The outbreak, as a result of the situation in Bosnia, the Hercegovina and Bulgaria, had been expected for some months, and all parties were prepared for immediate hostilities.

The Serbian army was composed of six Divisions, each of approximately 11,000 effectives. The troops were mostly militiamen, of good quality, but of no previous military experience. Both the cavalry and artillery were weak, but the general effectiveness of the forces had been increased by a steady influx of Russian, and of a few German, officers. The following analysis gives the

distribution of the Serbian forces at the outbreak of hostilities :—

<i>Frontier.</i>	<i>Base.</i>	<i>Commander.</i>	<i>Effectives.</i>
N.E.	Saičar.	Lešjanin.	1 Infantry Division, approx. 6,000. 1 Cavalry Regiment, weak. The " Sacred Legion " of Bulgarian Volunteers, approx. 2,000.
S.E.	Aleksinac.	Černaiev.	3 full Divisions. Volunteer formations not ascertained, approx. total, 45,000.
S.W.	Ušica.	Zach.	1 weak Division.
N.W.	Šabac.	Alympić.	1 Division, mostly volunteers.

The plan of campaign was that the N.E. Army under Lešjanin should hold the line of the Timok, and cover the roads leading by Kladovo and Negotin to Semendria. At the same time Lešjanin was to make a feint attack on Vidin in support of Černaiev's advance on Sofia. Zach was to attack the Turkish line of communications through the Sanjak to Serajevo, while Alympić was to reduce the Turkish Drina forts of Bjelina and Zvornik.

The main attack under Černaiev¹ was to be

¹ General Michael Černaiev, of Central Asian fame, had come to Belgrad as the correspondent of the *Russki Mir*, and had immediately been appointed to the supreme command of the Serbian Army.

directed against the Turkish base at Sofia, while a weak force was left to hold Aleksinac, and to mask the Turkish garrison at Niš, which Černaiev in his advance would be leaving on his right flank. The plan was daring, for a successful occupation of Sofia would enable the Serbs to isolate the Turkish forces in Bosnia, and to divide and combat in detail both the forces stationed in Macedonia and N.W. Bulgaria, and reinforcements coming from Adrianople and Salonika.

It is difficult to ascertain the numbers of the Turkish troops concentrated along the Serbian frontiers at the beginning of July, but the following analysis gives the approximate distribution :—

<i>Frontier.</i>	<i>Base.</i>	<i>Commander.</i>	<i>Effectives.</i>
N.W.	Vidin.	Osman Nuri.	23,000, mostly infantry.
W.	Sofia.	Abdul Kerim (Nejeb and a German, Blüm, held effective command).	50,000, with numbers of Circassians and Bashi-Bazuks.
S.W.	Niš.	Mehemet.	8,000 approx.
S.W.	Sanjak posts.	Dervish and Mehemet Ali.	12,000, mostly Arab and Egyptian contingents.
N.E.	Bjelina and Zvornik.	—	Small garrisons.

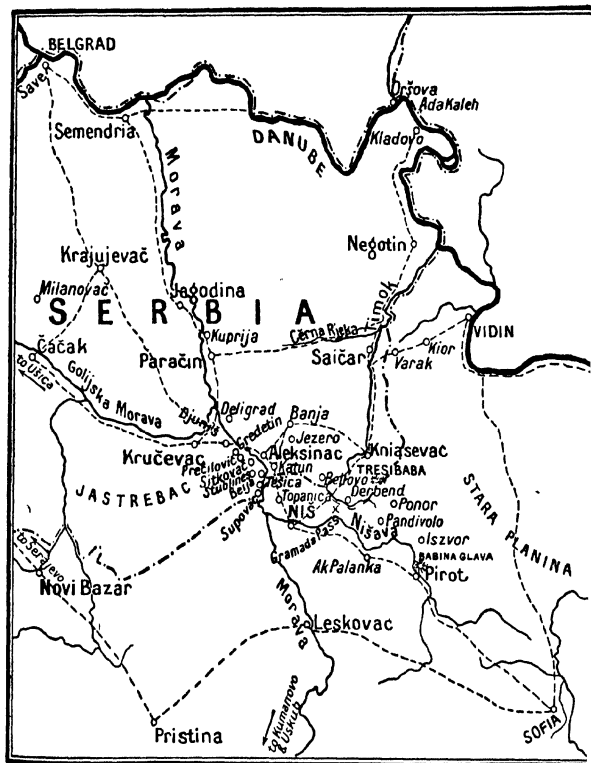
The operations on the Serbian W. and S.W. fronts may be dismissed as unimportant. Colonel Nanko Alympić was repulsed in an attack on Bjelina, and settled down to the ineffectual investment of that place. On July 6th, Zach with a portion of the Ušica Division was forced to retire after an action with Mehemet Ali Pasha ¹ near the hamlet and pass of Javor, covering the important post of Sjeniča. The rest of the Ušica Division, under Colonel Čolak Antić, was no more successful in an action with Dervish Pasha, who was covering Novi Bazar. The Ušica Division was later sent to reinforce the Army of the Morava, while Dervish withdrew the bulk of his troops to the southern frontier of Montenegro.

Lešjanin had been even less fortunate in his feint on Vidin. On July 2nd he crossed the frontier with the whole garrison of Saičar. Osman Pasha ² next day marched out of Vidin in two columns and surprised the invaders at a point between the hamlets called Kior and Varak. Lešjanin's untrained militiamen broke before a bayonet charge of Rume-

¹ A German renegade, later represented the Turks at the Berlin Conference.

² Later the defender of Plevna.

Sketch Map to illustrate SERBO-TURKISH CAMPAIGN 1876.



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Roads are only approximately indicated

lian *redifs*, and the whole Serbian army fled in a mob towards the Timok. The "Sacred Legion" was cut to pieces, the losses of Lešjanin being estimated at over 2,600 killed. Lešjanin rallied his troops to oppose Osman's passage of the Timok, and on the 4th repulsed several bayonet attacks. On the following day, however, the Turks forded the river lower down, and took the Serbian line in flank. Lešjanin fell back to Saičar with a further loss of seven guns and 1,800 men.

Meanwhile Černaiev had begun the great advance on Sofia. On July 3rd a Serbian detachment occupied the hamlet of Topanica, to the north of Niš. The next day the main forces advanced down the valley of the Nišava;¹ the Serbian right wing drove a Turkish contingent from Ak Palanka, on the left bank of the Nišava, covering the junction of roads between Pirot, Leskovac and Kniasovac, while the left wing, advancing through the country north of the Nišava, took the block-house of Pandivolo, and occupied the important height of Babina Glava, N.W. of Pirot. Here, however, Černaiev came into

¹ The valley of the Nišava, it should be remarked, is one of the loveliest districts in the Balkans, comparable even to the country between Banjaluka and Jaice in Bosnia.

contact with strong Turkish forces, and there followed during the next three weeks a series of hotly-contested engagements. A column from Sofia under Hafiz Pasha and Ahmed Ayub Pasha drove the Serbs from Ak Palanka back on to the Gramada Pass. At the same time, Suleiman Pasha,¹ marching from Pirot on Iszvor, turned their position at Babina Glava, and forced them back to Pandivolo. Here he again attacked, and compelled them to retreat after a severe engagement. Hafiz, following the Serbian right wing from Ak Palanka, brought them to action again in the Gramada Pass. Černaiev then retired on the village of Derbend, which he did not attempt to defend, since his left was already threatened by Suleiman coming from Pandivolo.

On July 31st the columns of Suleiman and Hafiz united at Ponor, within a few hours' march of the important Serbian frontier town of Kniasevac, covering the upper valley of the Timok. At this juncture Černaiev appears to have considered that the Turkish advance on Kniasevac from the south was only a feint to retain the Serban forces, while Osman made the real attack on Saičar. Accordingly he hastened north to superintend the defence

¹ Later commanded at Shipka and in the Rhodopé.

of this town, leaving Colonel Horvatović at Kniasevac with only six battalions to oppose the combined armies of Suleiman and Hafiz.

On August 4th–5th overwhelming Turkish forces were hurled against the heights of Tresibaba, which cover the approach to Kniasevac. Horvatović sent in vain for help, and on the second day withdrew the remnants of his small force from the town.

The Timok line was turned, and Saičar was in deadly peril, for it was threatened on the east by the army of Osman, and on the south by those of Suleiman and Hafiz. Černaiev would not risk another battle, but withdrew into the mountains west of the Timok by the roads leading to Paračin and the Morava valley. On August 7th Osman entered Saičar, and a few days later Mushir Abdul Kerim Pasha, the elderly and dilatory generalissimo, arrived in Niš from Constantinople, to assume command of further operations.

2. *The Morava Battles, August 18th–September 3rd.*—Four different plans of campaign were open to Abdul Kerim Pasha after the conquest of the Timok valley :—

(1) With Vidin and Saičar as bases, to move via N.E. Serbia and the Danube, on Semendria and Belgrad.

(2) To advance through the difficult mountain country, west of the Timok, up the valley of the Černa Rjeka, on Kuprija and Paračin.

(3) To move from Kniasevac, via the Banja Pass, thus threatening Aleksinac from the rear.

(4) With Niš as a convenient base, to storm Aleksinac, and then to proceed straight up the Morava valley on Semendria.

Commissariat difficulties forbade the adoption of (1)—although from more than one point of view this plan promised more brilliant results than either of the three alternatives—for by an agreement with Rumania the Porte had stipulated not to carry the war into Serbo-Rumanian waters, upon condition that the Turkish island of Ada Kaleh below Orșova should be declared neutral.

To carry out either (2) or (3) would involve the costly forcing of Černaiev's difficult mountain positions between the Timok and the Morava, where the Serbian aptitude for guerrilla warfare could be exercised to its fullest extent, and where, owing to the absence of roads, and the distance from their bases, the Turkish preponderance in artillery would avail them little.

Abdul Kerim therefore of necessity was forced to adopt the fourth plan, whereby Niš

afforded a convenient base for operations against Aleksinac, and the easier country of the Morava valley would facilitate the transport of artillery in a subsequent advance on Semendria and Belgrad.

Accordingly during the second and third weeks of August, Abdul Kerim transferred the major part of his forces from the valley of the Timok to Niš, leaving Osman with a weak contingent to hold Saičar, and evacuating Kniasevac, the ruins of which Horvatović immediately reoccupied, much to the joy of the mercurial inhabitants of Belgrad.

By August 18th 40,000 regulars and a horde of Circassians and Bashi-Bazuks were concentrated at Niš, ready for an advance up the Morava. To oppose them Černaiev had, at Aleksinac, between 20,000 and 30,000 men, while at Kručevac was Čolak Antić with possibly 5,000 men from Zach's Ušica Division, and in the neighbourhood of Banja and Kniasevac was a weak Division under Horvatović. The Serbs were, however, receiving steady though unofficial support from Russia. Every day arms, provisions, and trained men were drifting into the country via Hungary and Rumania. On August 25th, H.B.M. Consul-General at Belgrad wrote that 200

Russian and nearly 100 German officers, and several thousand non-commissioned officers and Cossack reservists of the Russian army had obtained commissions or enlisted in Serbian regiments. And he went on to say : “ They have everything in their hands and the native officers are now a comparatively insignificant minority. . . . ”

The Turkish offensive opened with a movement by Mehemet Pasha, the Governor of Niš, against Kručevac on the left bank of the Morava, an operation apparently of no real significance, but merely intended to draw Černaiev's attention, for the real attack did not commence until August 18th, when Abdul Kerim's advance guard drove the Serbian outposts out of the frontier village of Supovac, on the left bank of the Morava, twelve miles south of Aleksinac. On the following day Ali Sahib Pasha moved forward on Tešica, where he came in contact with the main enemy forces of two divisions. A battle raged all day, and towards evening the Serbians received reinforcements and completely repulsed the Turks. Meanwhile the Division of Ahmed Ayub, marching by the Gramada Pass and Bellovo, had actually penetrated as far as Jezero, considerably to the N.E. of Aleksinac, where

it was attacked and driven back to Katun by the left wing of Černaiev and by the Division of Horvatović, coming up from the direction of Banja.

At this juncture the Porte became alarmed by diplomatic indications of coming intervention on the part of Russia, and it was considered desirable to hold Aleksinac and the Morava valley in order to be able to obtain more favourable terms in the event of an armistice being imposed by the concerted action of the Powers. Abdul Kerim, therefore, was ordered to take Aleksinac immediately and at any cost. Accordingly he transferred Ahmed Ayub's command from the right bank of the Morava to the left, united it with that of Ali Sahib, and on September 1st initiated a general attack on the Serbian positions. The Serbian lines extended from Prečilović in the north, through Sitkovac, Meršil and Belja, whence it curved south-east to Tešica. The Turkish right flank was opposed to the Serbian left at Tešica, thence their lines extended north-west through Drenovat to Stublines.

The battle from the first developed into a direct frontal attack, and the result depended on preponderance of artillery and infantry

numbers. During the morning Abdul Kerim's superior artillery bombarded the Serbian entrenchments. By noon the villages behind the Serbian lines were in flames, and their infantry under a heavy fire could be seen retiring precipitately through the smoke. The Turkish infantry thereupon charged with the bayonet and drove the fugitives, a panic-stricken mob, into the streets and gardens of Aleksinac. By four o'clock in the afternoon Abdul Kerim had his left well through Gredetin, north-west of Sitkovac, and his right into Belja, and Černaiev was evacuating the left bank of the Morava by the wooden bridge over the river.

The Turkish victory was so complete that General Kemball, H.B.M. Military Attaché at Constantinople, asserted that if Abdul Kerim had pressed over the river during the night he might have occupied the fortress without firing another shot. By dawn, however, Horvatić's fresh Division had arrived and the opportunity was lost. On September 3rd the Turks commenced working up the left bank in the direction of Djuniš.

3. *The Battles of Djuniš, October 1876.*—On September 24th a ten days' armistice was concluded between the belligerents, at the request of Prince Milan, who after the battles

round Aleksinac had appealed for the intervention of the Guaranteeing Powers.

Negotiations between the Powers and the belligerents had been proceeding during the whole of September, and a rupture occurred only two days after the conclusion of the armistice. The Serbs were still receiving continual diplomatic and material support from Russia, and the war-party in the Principality regained their ascendancy. Prince Milan, who was constitutionally a subject of the Sultan, and governed his Principality as an autonomous part of the Ottoman Empire, was proclaimed King at the Army H.Q. in the village of Deligrad, and the reorganised Serbian Army prepared to assume the offensive.

On September 28th the Serbians recommenced hostilities on the Morava by a general attack along the Turkish lines from Djuniš to Aleksinac. Colonel Horvatović, the gallant commandant of Kniasevac, was now in supreme command; his right wing, under Čolak Antić, being opposed to the Turkish left under Adyl Pasha, while his left, covering Aleksinac, engaged the brigade of Hafiz Pasha.

After twelve hours' hard fighting the attack was repulsed all along the front, and on the following day, the 29th, the Turks assumed

the offensive and gained some ground. The advance, however, was interrupted by the orders of Abdul Kerim, who was unwilling to attack without definite instructions from Constantinople. For three weeks after this engagement the Ottoman troops remained strictly on the defensive. But the reluctance of the Serbian Government to assent to a prolonged armistice, while the enemy armies were making so little progress, and when the armed intervention of Russia was becoming daily more probable, caused the Porte to seek fresh successes in the field with the object of forcing a truce. Accordingly orders were sent to Abdul Kerim to resume the offensive.

Ahmed Ayub, who commanded at the front—for his superior never ventured nearer than Niš—determined to begin with an attack on Čolak Antić, who was posted at Djuniš on the left flank and rear of the Ottoman army. Ahmed Ayub's object was to obtain command of the roads meeting at Djuniš, and thus to be in a position to turn the enemy's position at Deligrad, and sever communication between Aleksinac and Paraćin.

At dawn on October 19th the Division of Adyl Pasha took by surprise the Serbian trenches on the heights opposed to them,

excepting a crest on the right, where the enemy defended themselves until night. All through the next day the Serbians, having been reinforced, resisted heroically, but a further advance rendered the height untenable, and they evacuated it during the night, withdrawing all their guns and retreating on to the hills west of the river, overlooking Deligrad and covering the Djuniš crossroads.

Ten days later (October 29th) this position, though strongly entrenched and protected by three batteries, was stormed in a few minutes. The Turks suffered considerably in the ascent, but when they were within 200 yards of the trenches, the Serbs—who here as at Varak, evinced no taste for the bayonet—quitted them, and running precipitately down the opposite slopes, made for the temporary wooden bridges over the Morava. Adyl had moved up his artillery in support, and the fugitives were mercilessly shelled as they crossed the river. The remnants of the Serbian right were cut off from the Morava by the Turkish advance, and forced to retire on Kručevac. Adyl's casualties amounted to about 600, while the Serbians lost double that number. Seven field guns and four mountain guns fell into the hands of the Turks.

While the *débâcle* of the 29th was in progress the stores and guns were being removed from Aleksinac, and on the morning of October 31st Circassian outposts reported that the town was empty of the enemy. Two days later Deligrad hoisted the white flag. The Serbian army was practically in dissolution, and the road to Belgrad lay open to the Turks.

As a result of the collapse of Serbian resistance in the October battles, the Tsar on November 1st delivered a forty-eight hours' ultimatum to the Porte, demanding the acceptance of an armistice. Six Russian Army Corps, amounting to 200,000 men, were known to be massed on the Bessarabian frontier, and the Porte accepted the situation.

The crisis produced the abortive Conference of Constantinople, at which the Powers failed either to arrive at a solution of the Bosnian and Bulgarian Questions, or to formulate a pacification between Turkey and the two Slav Principalities.

In February 1877, however, the Porte, anticipating the outbreak of hostilities with Russia, concluded a convention with Prince Milan, on the basis of *status quo ante bellum*, and the Turks evacuated the Timok and Morava valleys.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE TREATY OF TRIANON

1. *The Former Kingdom of Hungary.*—To understand the significance of the changes—political, economic and strategic—which have been brought about by the Treaty of Trianon, it will be necessary to examine briefly the geographical formation of the Kingdom of Hungary as it existed until November 1918, and to outline the main tendencies, economic and historical, which have contributed to the formation of the Hungarian State.

Hungary is surrounded in a semicircle from north-west to south-east by the great natural wall of the Carpathians. The Carpathians may be divided for political purposes into three sectors: (1) the Western Carpathians, which stretch for a distance of over three hundred miles from Pozsöny on the Danube, to the sources of the rivers Ondova and Töpoly; (2) the North-eastern Carpathians, 250 miles in length, which run from the Ondova-Topoly region to the Rodna Massif, and form the watershed of the rivers

Dneister, Pruth and Sereth to the north-east, the Szambös and Tisza to the south; and (3) the Eastern Carpathians or Transylvanian Alps, which run 200 miles south from Rodna to the Wallachian Plain, and then turn west for 250 miles to the Iron Gates at Orşova. The whole range encloses the vast Hungarian plain, which can be divided into three parts: (1) the Great Alföld, the central plain stretching between Budapest and the Danube at Belgrad; (2) the Little Alföld on the north-west, between Pozsöny and Budapest, separated from the Great Alföld by some low ranges of hills; and (3) the Transylvanian Plateau, divided from the Great Alföld by the Gyalu block. The whole is watered by the Danube and the Tisza, flowing from north to south, and by a multitude of tributaries, many with a considerable displacement of water, flowing west to east, and east to west. Hungary is thus a perfect economic unit, sheltered by the Carpathians—themselves rich in the timber and minerals which the plains do not possess—from the influence of northern and eastern climatic conditions; and watered by rivers, which serve both as a means of fertilisation and of communication. But there are two gaps, unprotected by

Nature, which have been economically a strength, and militarily a weakness to the Hungarians. On the north-west the valley of the Danube leads into Austria and the South German lands; on the south-east the valleys of the rivers falling into the Danube, the Morava, the Save, the Drin, the Bosna and the Vbras, are passage-ways which give access from the Balkan and Adriatic lands into Hungary. Economically they are trade routes; militarily they are roads of invasion. And the military history of Hungary is the story of attempts to capture and hold these routes, of their loss, and of their recapture.

Between the tenth and fifteenth centuries, when the Hungarian Kingdom was being founded and consolidated, the military strength of the Hungarian Kings, based on a feudal system, which itself was founded on a tribal organisation adapted particularly to war, had enabled the Hungarians to dominate the whole of Central Europe. Bohemia and Poland, Moldavia and Wallachia, Serbia and Bosnia, in turn recognised the supremacy of the Kings of Buda, and there was consolidated the first compact monarchical state in Europe, which Hungarians now proudly call the Millennium Kingdom, at a date when

Britain and France were yet little more than an agglomeration of large feudal principalities (England, Wales, Scotland, France, Burgundy, Brittany, Normandy, Anjou, Provence). Circumstances combined to ruin the Hungarian Monarchy; an ambitious foreign policy sapped the military strength of the country, internal trouble weakened its political position, at the period when the Turkish armies were conquering the Balkans. After a long series of wars the Osmanli occupied the heads of all the southern Danube tributaries; at the beginning of the sixteenth century they at last took the Hungarian bastions in the south, Belgrad, Temesvar and Szeged, and finally overran all the Great Alföld up to Buda. At the same time the Austrians came in on the west, and a Habsburg was proclaimed king of the strip of Western Hungary (Söprön district and Slovakia) which remained free of the Turks.

For nearly two centuries the Hungarian kingdom ceased to exist, but Hungarians never relinquished their national ideal, and allied themselves with or fought against Austrians and Turks with unscrupulous impartiality, holding as their one great principle the re-establishment of the Kingdom.

Finally, during the eighteenth century, the Turks were driven completely out of the Great Alföld, and a struggle for supremacy in Hungary began between the native aristocracy and the foreign Habsburg dynasty, which was only compromised by the Ausgleich of 1867.

This long subjection to Austria and Turkey has had a profound effect on the social and economic development of Hungary. First, there was no social progress between the eleventh and seventeenth centuries—a most important period in the social history of Western Europe—and when the Hungarian Kingdom was re-established under the Habsburgs the country was reorganised as a feudal State. Constant war kept the peasants in subjection to their military leaders, the nobles, while the necessity for repopulating and developing the whole of the Alföld—which had degenerated into a steppe under the Turks—and the rich alluvial regions of Bacska and the Banat, prevented that over-population which is the most direct cause of modifications in a social system. Further, the economic policy of the Habsburgs, directed towards developing the industrial resources of Austria in preference to those of Hungary, checked the conversion of Hungary from an

agricultural into an industrial State, and prevented the growth of a middle class of sufficient strength to assert their political aspirations in opposition to those of the nobles. Lastly the psychology of the Hungarian peasant must be considered. He is slow and heavy-witted, with the proverbial stolidity, patience and indifference of the Mongoloid nomad race from which his nation is sprung. He is also intensely conservative in instinct, imitative and obedient. Thus from various causes, historical, economic and psychological, Hungary has preserved into the twentieth century a social system which recalls those of the Middle Ages.

In the last half-century, the question of the subject nationalities in Hungary, which first came into prominence and was exploited by Vienna during the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848, had assumed alarming proportions. But antagonism between the subject nationalities and the dominant race was by no means so acute as in Austria. The Slovaks and Ruthenians, in the north, did not subscribe to the extreme claims of the Czechs, while in the south, the Croats only demanded fuller autonomy, and their middle classes at least were not enthusiastic

advocates of union with the Balkan Slavs, whose culture, in which survived the elements of Turkish inefficiency and corruption, they despised. The Wallachs of Eastern Hungary and Transylvania were possibly the most extreme in their claims, but they, even, hoped for an equal union of all Rumanians with Hungary, rather than for complete independence. In general, the differences between the Magyars and the subject races were fundamentally social and agrarian, rather than national, and had not the War supervened it is probable that a solution of the national question would have been found within the fabric of the Hungarian State.

2. *The Treaty of Trianon: Economic Results.*—By the Treaty of Trianon Hungary lost two-thirds of her former territories. The settlement was based, in theory, upon the principles enunciated by the late President Wilson, and it is impossible in a short general article to deal in detail with the several great questions, moral as well as political, involved. Sufficient to remark that, basing their propaganda in the disputed districts on the principle of an agrarian revolution at the expense of the Magyar landowners, and abroad on the great ideal of Self-Determination, the shrewd

politicians of Prague succeeded in obtaining from the Peace Conference the whole of the Western and Northern Carpathian districts of Hungary ; while the politicians of Bucharest, themselves landowners, with an historical record considerably less reputable than that of the Magyars whom they denounced, secured the whole of the rich mineral and forest districts of Transylvania, with a broad strip of flat country between the Transylvanian Alps and the Tisza, the whole containing nearly two million Hungarians. On the south, Croatia-Slavonia was—with justice—incorporated in Jugoslavia, while the rich alluvial lands of Bacska and the Banat, developed by a huge expenditure of Hungarian capital and effort, were divided between Rumania and Jugoslavia. Over half a million Hungarians were incorporated in Slovakia, and Pozsöny, a purely German-Hungarian town, and the ancient capital of the kingdom, was sacrificed to satisfy the ambitious Czech project for a port on the Danube.

The Great and Little Alfölds alone remained to Hungary, which now forms a purely agricultural country, with a small industrial area round Budapest. Hungary has lost her main mineral regions, with the exception of

the Baranya country, in the south, and must now rely on imported coal,¹ iron and copper. Salt, of which 200,000 metric quintals per annum were produced before the War, is now completely lacking. More severe were her losses in forests. The present frontiers include only 13·4 per cent. of the former forest area of Hungary, and the timber remaining is of secondary quality. The present production of Hungarian saw-mills is 10·6 per cent. of the production in 1913; of Hungarian paper-mills 1·0 per cent.

Further, Hungarian agriculture is adversely affected by a delineation of frontiers, which has left in hostile hands the sources of some of the chief rivers watering the Great Alföld. Thus the Tisza finds its sources in the counties of Sarös, Zemplén, Ung, Bereg and Maramarös, ceded to Czechoslovakia, and in Szilagy and Besztersze, ceded to Rumania. Similarly, the sources of the Körös and the upper course of the Marös—which joins the Tisza at the important agricultural centre of Szeged—lie in Rumanian territory.

During the last half century, by careful afforestation at the sources, and by works

¹ Hungarian coal-supply was always deficient, and she imported largely before the War.

lower down, the Hungarians had sought to regulate the courses of these rivers, and had succeeded in reclaiming great areas of marsh-land, and in irrigating moorland, on both sides of the Tisza. But since the Armistice the new authorities in Slovakia and Transylvania have, either maliciously or carelessly, neglected the works along the courses of the rivers, and have engaged in widespread felling of trees—with consequent deforestation at the sources—with the result that, during the last six years, wide stretches of the Alföld have been affected, and are threatened with desiccation or inundation.

A serious defect of the Treaty, which affects the Slovaks, Ruthenians and Transylvanians even more than the Hungarians, has been the neglect to consider the question of labour distribution. Before the War, it was the custom of the inhabitants of the Carpathians and Transylvanian Highlands to pass the winter in timber-felling, and, when the spring came, to float down the rivers with their timber for sale in the Alföld. Here the mountaineers would remain for the summer, and seek employment as extra labour in harvesting, returning in the autumn to the mountains with a comfortable sum of money. Since the Armistice the policy of the Czecho-

slovak Government has been to sever as far as possible the economic connections of Slovakia with Hungary, with the result that thousands of Slovak workmen have been thrown out of work. A similar policy has been pursued by the Rumanian Government, who, in June 1920, suppressed with unnecessary severity a movement of some thousands of Rumanian workmen in the county of Bihar, who tried to pass the military line and enter the Hungarian Alföld for harvesting.

In general it must be recognised that the effects of the Treaty are disastrous for the whole of the territories forming the old kingdom of Hungary, with the exception possibly of Croatia-Slavonia. The food-producing regions have been separated from the timber- and mineral-producing regions, the distribution of labour has been dislocated, and agriculture has been affected, in a degree by political vindictiveness in the control of water-power, and to a great extent by agrarian reforms and administrative changes, the details of which it is impossible to discuss in a short paper. Again, the detachment of Slovakia from agricultural Hungary, and its attachment to industrial Bohemia, has tended to accentuate, and not to solve, the supply

difficulties of the Czechs, and has completed the creation out of the old Habsburg Empire of a second Republic dependent on foreign countries for vital food supplies. The inclusion in Slovakia of agricultural districts such as Czallakös, with large Hungarian racial majorities, represents an immoral and futile attempt to secure to the Carpathian mountain counties some of the fertile lowland districts.

3. *The Treaty of Trianon: New Strategic Frontiers.*—By the Treaty Hungary has been rendered virtually defenceless. On the north the Czechoslovaks command all the Carpathian approaches to the Little Alföld, and are within two days' march of Budapest. On the south the Yugoslavs have come into possession of the different heads of valleys (Save, Drin, etc.) leading into the Great Alföld. On the east the Tisza, as a river line, forms a very unsatisfactory defence against Rumania. Political arguments might conceivably be brought forward to justify this complete subjection of the Hungarian plains to the peoples of the surrounding mountain countries. The Treaty of Trianon is, however, open to more serious criticism from a strategic standpoint. By the partition of the Carpathians between Czechoslovakia

and Rumania, this formidable line of defence for Central Europe, whose strength has been proved many times in history, and particularly in the late War, has been rendered useless. The whole of the Northern Carpathians, with the vital sector between the Tököly and Czorna Hora, have passed to the Czechs; the Eastern Carpathians, with the passes leading into the valleys of the Pruth, the Sereth and the Moldava to Rumania. Czechoslovakia thus controls a narrow strip of mountainous country, roughly 250 miles by 50, from Kosice (Kassa) to Maramarös, which the history of the Russo-German campaigns of 1914-17 teaches is the gateway from the East into Central Europe. It would be necessary to defend this strip—"our sausage," as the Czechs call it, against an attack from north-east to south-west, operating on a line of supply running west to east. East of Kosice, the Czechs have no adequate railway communication west to east, and thus a Russian attacking army would be able with ease to occupy the lateral valleys of the streams flowing southward into the Tisza. From Maramarös they could then proceed to turn the Rumanian river defences (Sereth, Pruth, etc.) or to march into Transylvania.

Thus the Eastern Carpathians, with their north-to-south passes and river valleys, and their lack of adequate west-to-east railway communication—which even if it existed would be difficult to defend—are useless as a future line of defence against a possible Russian attack.

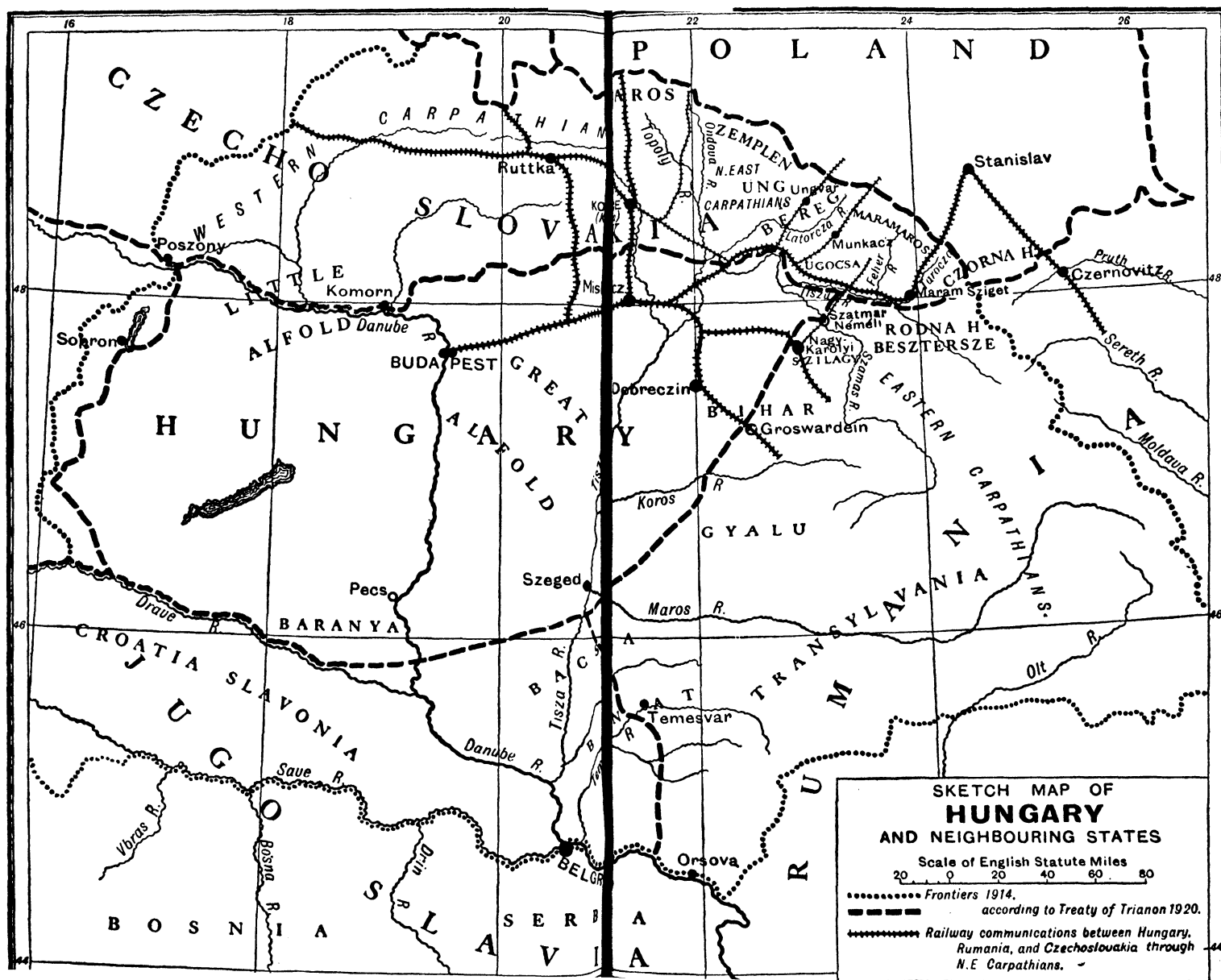
The historical and natural defenders of the Carpathian line are the Hungarians, who are in a geographical position to offer an opposition to an advance through the Carpathians, on a front running west to east. Their control of the lateral line Miskolcz–Nagy Karolyi, with branches running north-west to Kosice, north-east to Munkacz and north-east-by-east to Szatmar–Néméti and Maramarös, afforded them, in the late War, an excellent network of communications.

An attack by Russia through the Carpathian passes may be an unlikely eventuality during the next generation. At the same time, a Russo-German coalition to revoke the Treaties, which have placed the best parts of Central Europe into new hands, is a possibility which must be considered. In the event of a combined Russo-German attack on Poland and the Little Entente States, the Carpathians as at present held are virtually indefensible.

4. *Suggested Modifications.*—Under present circumstances any alteration of the Trianon Treaty in favour of Hungary, or any concessions on the part of the victorious States for the general good of Central Europe, appear impossible. At the same time, Czechoslovak and Rumanian politicians will do well to remember that the stability of their states only rests on the goodwill and continued support of the Entente. Any change in British and French policy, or any declared determination to refrain from all active intervention, would at once expose both states to attack from their despoiled neighbours, and to dissolution. Only a policy of reconciliation and reasonable concession can give to Czechoslovakia and Rumania any lasting guarantee of territorial security. Politically a policy of toleration and moderation towards national minorities, and an attitude holding promise of concession and co-operation towards partitioned Hungary, alone can bring peace and, eventually, contentment and a decline of irredentism to the defeated. Economically, the first necessity for Central Europe is a Customs Union, or some kind of commercial understanding between Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary and Rumania. Yugoslavia,

which is an economic unit, with interests rather in the Balkans and the Adriatic, need not be included. To the other States, some understanding which will combine the industries of Austria and Czechoslovakia, the mineral resources and forests of Slovakia and Rumania, and the agriculture of Hungary and Rumania, is an urgent necessity. To such a union the commercial ambition of Czechoslovakia is the main obstacle, and in this respect it is to be regretted that the acquisition of a Danubian frontier from Pozsöny to Komorn has made her independent of co-operation with the other riverain States.

Further, a frontier revision is urgent which will give to Hungary control of the Carpathians between the Tököly and Rodna. Such a concession would be to the strategical advantage of all the Carpathian States, for Hungary would then be interested as a defender against, and not as the ally of, an attack from the east. A concession which would give to Hungary the counties of Zemplén, Ung, Bereg, Ugocza and Maramarös, would be both to the strategical and economic advantage of all concerned, and would at the same time be a guarantee of a new spirit of reason and conciliation in Central European relations.



THE MOUNTAIN OF LANGUAGES

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IN the Voyage of the Argonauts "at day-dawn they looked eastward, and midway between the sea and the sky they saw white snow-peaks hanging, glittering sharp and bright above the clouds. And they knew that they were come to Caucasus at the end of all the earth: Caucasus the highest of all mountains, the father of the rivers of the East. On his peak is chained the Titan,

while a vulture tears his heart; and at his feet are piled dark forests round the magic Colchian land."

For long centuries the mountains of Caucasus remained a mystery to the sons of men. The Milesians, and in later times the Greeks and the Romans, traded with the tribes, suffered their piratical ravages upon merchant ships, and rebought their own goods from the pirates, at the trading stations along the coast.

The precise words of Strabo and Pliny show that the Ancients knew well the lands to the north and south of the great range—the Tanais where men grew rich in the trade in furs, salt-fish and wheat and gold, and Colchis, whence, says Strabo, Mithridates of Pontus derived the greatest part of his timber and supplies for the equipment of his naval armament.

But of the mountains, their information was most vague. Pliny tells us that in the market of Dioscurias (near the site of Sukhum) one hundred different interpreters were required for the conduct of business with the mountain tribes, but neither he nor his contemporaries have much to say of these tribes beyond tales of strange beasts and stranger folk. To "the highest of all mountains"

belong the legends of Prometheus, of the Golden Fleece and of the Amazons.

The Arabs, who were the most intelligent geographers among the nations, have little more to say, though the contemporaries of the great school of Arab geographers fought several campaigns in the Eastern Caucasus—the most accessible part of the range called Daghestan or the Highlands. To the Arabs the Caucasus remained the land of Gog and Magog, and although their knowledge extended to the Volga regions, they regarded the great range as the confines of the earth, beyond which strange wild peoples lived in cold and darkness. From the multiplicity of its peoples, they called the Caucasus “The Mountain of Languages,” and El-Masudi observes that “the people who live on it and about it can only be counted by Him who created them.”

When the tide of the Turkish and Mongol wars swept away the Arab civilisation, geography, with the other arts, passed from the Middle Eastern countries, and between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries there survives, beyond sparse records of warfare, little written information of the Caucasus. Under the Mongols, however, Venetian and

Genoese merchants began to visit those half-forgotten lands. Marco Polo speaks only "of Georgiana and the kings thereof," and of the "sea of Bachu," and it is Josaphat Barbaro, who visited Georgia and Persia between 1436 and 1452, who first makes any clear reference to the mountain country. "From the sea of Bachu," he writes, "unto the sea Maggiore, the straight waie is, as it were, by line V^c myles. All which groundes is full of mountaignes and valleys, in some places well enhabited by certain Lordes of it (through whose territories no man darr pass for fear of robbyng); but for the more part it is disenhabited."

It was a hundred years later that Giorgio Interiano, a Genoese traveller, made a detailed account of the tribes of the western half of the Caucasus. He was followed by the Turkish historian Evliya and the Huguenot jeweller Chardin, who both wrote in the seventeenth century. But no good narratives concerning the tribes of the Central and Eastern Caucasus are extant until the eighteenth century, when the approach of the Russians enabled numerous travellers to visit the tribes, such as Hanway, who wrote of Daghestan and the Caspian coast, and Potocki,

Reineggs, Klaproth and others. Of native writers the Georgian geographer Vakhusht has left an excellent account of the Ossets.

In the Western Mountains, along the Black Sea, the coastal valleys formed the natural settlements, and the different ranges the natural frontiers. The numerous tribes were known generically by the Turkish name of Cherkess, or the Italian form Circassian—the suggested derivation being from the Turkish words *cher* (road) and *kesmek* (to cut), signifying brigands. The social organisation of the Cherkesses was on an elaborate feudal basis; the people were rigidly divided into five classes; very definite laws regulated the rights and duties of the various castes, and intermarriage between any two castes was forbidden. Nevertheless their political organisation was in many respects anarchical, for not only was every tribe independent, but every noble's family within each tribe.

The mountaineers, according to all accounts, possessed the accepted characteristics of all semi-civilised peoples; on the one hand, reckless courage, extreme generosity, hospitality, respect for the aged, and love of animals: on the other, a susceptibility to offence and a childish vindictiveness which

was expressed in perpetual and bloodthirsty vendettas, extreme personal vanity, a disinclination to submit to discipline or to undertake regular work, cruelty, callousness and violence.

“ Within this country,” says Evliya, “ are some hundred thousand men without law or religion . . . they are a wild, roving people, and a man who does not steal and plunder is thought to be bad company, so that they give him not their daughters in marriage.”

Interiano describes the raids of the Cherkeses. Speaking of the rivers of Circassia, he refers to “ large and small streams that have several mouths . . . and form almost boundless swamps, through which many fords and passages have been made. By these secret ways, they clandestinely proceed to attack the poor peasants, whom they carry off with their cattle and children from one country to another and sell or barter them away.” This account is confirmed by Evliya, who, speaking of the “ great river Fasha ” (Rion), says: “ On the east side are the Mingrelian villages, on the west the Abaza, and both shores being covered with thick forests, the two peoples mutually steal their children of both sexes, and sell them as

slaves." Interiano continues, "They have daily engagements with the Tartars, by whom they are on almost all sides surrounded. They also cross the Bosphorus to the Taurian peninsula, in which country is situated Kafa, a colony established at a remote period by the Genoese, and they pass the strait in winter, when the sea is frozen, to carry off the Scythian inhabitants. . . ."

Evliya, who cruised along the whole coast of Circassia in a Turkish vessel, and stopped at many ports, has left the following description of the country. "The country of the Abazas extends from the Phasus (Rion), along the sea-coast forty days' journey in length, and in breadth from five days' journey down to one . . . altogether seventy high mountains with two thousand villages. . . . Their mountains are very fruitful, particularly in nuts, hazel-nuts and apricots; they bear the same arms as the Arabs, arrows, bows and lances, have few horsemen, but valorous footmen. . . . Bears, swine, foxes, jackals, and woodcocks are found in great numbers in the mountains. . . . Swine are fed to the size of asses. . . . These Abaza people have a strange mode of burying their Beks; they put the body into a wooden coffin, which

they nail on to the branches of some high tree and make a hole in the coffin near the head, that the Beg, as they say, may look up to Heaven; bees enter the coffin and make honey, entirely wrapping the body up in it; when the season comes, they open the coffin, take the honey, and sell it; much caution, therefore, is required to be used in purchasing the honey of the Abazas."

Of the tribes of the Central and Eastern Caucasus, early information is less detailed. The Ossets, south and east of the Darial, were, according to Vakhusht, universally poor, tending on bleak mountain-sides flocks of undergrown sheep and scabby goats, victims often of destroying avalanches which crushed out their rude stone villages, and of fierce hailstorms which swept away their meagre crops.

The Lesghians—a term which covers all the varied tribes of Daghestan—were more prosperous. "Their valleys," Hanway says, "are exceedingly fertile, producing plenty of wheat, oats and barley, with abundance of sheep, while their hills are covered with vines, from which they make very good wine, and have plenty of it. . . ." But they were hungry rievors, good horsemen, incendiaries

and thieves, who rode down often to loot the Georgian lowlands, Telav and Signakh, the market-towns of the Kakhetian vintners, and Tiflis, the rich metropolis of Christian Transcaucasia. Or, when the Persian Shah was weak, they would hold to ransom his frontier town of Derbend, and blackmail the wealthy merchants of Shemakha.

All the Daghestanli tribes were organised on a patriarchal though extremely democratic basis—in contrast to the feudal caste-system of the Cherkesses, and their chiefs were always elected and controlled by councils of elders. To quote Hanway again: “As they live under a kind of republican government, the distinction paid to him (the chief) is not very great.”

Racially the tribes of the Western and Eastern Caucasus are very different. The Cherkesses of the West have certain linguistic and anthropological affinities with the Georgians, but owing to the segregation of the different tribes in obscure mountain valleys during the course of probably thirty centuries, their languages and customs have become so differentiated that it is often difficult to trace any connection either between neighbouring tribes or generally between the moun-

taineers and the lowland Georgians. The Abkhazians possibly approximate most nearly to the Georgians.

The Eastern tribes constitute a strange flotsam and jetsam of every fugitive and beaten race and of every conquering army of the Middle Eastern lands. The earliest Iranians of the Kura basin fled into Daghestan, and later communities in flight of Georgians and Armenians. The Persian Sassanids laid a frontier line across the mountains from Darial to Derbend, and afterwards the Arabs held it for three centuries, and their deserters and time-expired men must have settled round about. The Khazars from the Volga basin drifted over Daghestan a score of times, and in later centuries Kipchaks and other kinds of Turks came from the north, Mongols from the south. All these races of invaders and fugitives make up the mongrel man of Daghestan.

In the history of the religion of the various tribes can be traced the effects of the influence of neighbouring civilisations. The primitive paganism of the tribes, tree, idol and animal worship, survived as a living force until the end of the eighteenth century. On the foundation of this paganism were grafted

the various faiths of the different races, who successively invaded or traded with the mountain regions. The Persians introduced fire-worship; the early Georgian kings propagated Christianity among the Abkhazians, Ossets and Lesghians. Even during the period of Arab hegemony in the Caucasus many districts were Christian which are now fanatically Muhammadan. The Arabs were successful in converting large parts of Daghestan to Islam, and their influence survives, not only in religious practices, but also in the writing and the methods of gardening and irrigation used by the Eastern tribes.

During the Middle Ages Christianity was further spread by the Georgian Bagratid kings among the Kabardans and Chechens, and in the Western Caucasus by Byzantine, Russian and Latin influences among the Cherkesses. But it was not until the sixteenth century, when Turkish influence was strong in the Caucasus, and when the Russians were approaching from the north, that religion, as a political force, became a serious issue.

The relations between the Turks and the Cherkesses were confined to the exchange of merchandise for slaves and raw materials. Such relations were mutually beneficial, for

while the Turks obtained from the Caucasus brave recruits for their Janissary Corps and beautiful wives for their harims, the young men of the mountains grasped eagerly at the opportunity of a brilliant military career in foreign lands, and the young women forwent with little misgiving the hard domesticity of their mountain huts for the lives of luxurious ease which lay beyond the slave markets of Trebizond, Akhaltsikh or Constantinople. Militarily, the Turks made no attempt to force their hegemony on the mountain tribes, while the latter for their part would have been quick to resent any encroachment on their independence. If Islam spread among the Western mountaineers, Cherkesses, Kabardans and Abkhazians, it was rather the result of casual but continuous contact with the Mussulman merchants and sailors than of any deliberate policy of proselytisation on the part of the Turks. And it was an easy faith, in the practice of which were mingled many old pagan superstitions and forgotten rites of Zoroastrian and Christian, and which lay as lightly on the Mountaineers as had Christianity during the period of Bagratid influence. Klaproth, commenting on the propagation of the Muhammadan faith among

the Kabardans during the latter half of the eighteenth century, remarks that "the Porte has endeavoured to spread the religion of Mohammed by means of ecclesiastical emissaries. . . . Their (the Kabardans') mullahs or priests are generally freedmen of the princes or *usden*, who go to the Tatars of Thabasseran or to Endery, where they learn to read and write a little, assume the title of Effendi, and return to their native country to instruct the people in the Mohammedan faith, and to detach them more and more from the connection with Russia."

In the Eastern Caucasus Islam had been maintained and consolidated, since the days of the Arabs, by constant contact with the Persians and Tatars of Shirvan. The Daghestanli were for the most part Sunni, and, at times, vented their fanaticism on the Shiah townsmen of Derbend and Shemakha. Hanway observes that the devotion to Islam of the Daghestanli was not regarded as profound by the Persians. "The Lesgees talk very lightly of the pretended miracles of Mohammed, adding that he was a very artful man, and whether he has any particular interest with the Almighty will be best known hereafter."

II

In the sixteenth century Cossack colonies were spreading along the steppe to the north, but they came little into hostile contact with the mountaineers, and when they did, found them formidable enemies. It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that Russian armies began to appear along the Terek and the Kuban, in war with Persia and Turkey. The Russians pressed south by the Derbend road, and through the Darial Pass, and fought for over half a century to drive the Turks and Persians out of Georgia. They fought the Cherkesses, Kabards and Chechens as allies of the Turks, and they subdued with ease the poverty-stricken Ossets. It was not until 1830, when they held the whole of Transcaucasia, that they realised that numerous warlike tribes, entrenched in mighty mountain fortresses, flanked their communications with the north. The Russian Generals thought that two years would be sufficient to reduce these scattered tribes to submission, but thirty years passed before the conquest could be completed. The story of this thirty years was familiar to a former generation of Englishmen. Year after

year the Russians cut their way through the Chechnian beech forests and stormed the stockaded villages; they marched over the bare hills of Daghestan and smashed with cannon the huddled nests of the Avar Lesghians; they built their blockhouses along the difficult Black Sea coast, to starve the Cherkess villages and cut the slave-route to Turkey. In Daghestan the famous Shamil rose up, and swept the Russians back to the Terek line and the forts along the Caspian. In 1843, 10,000 Russians were cut to pieces in the Chechnian forests. On the Black Sea coast the Russians died in thousands from malaria. During the Crimean War the Allies made some attempt to co-operate with the mountaineers, and a Turkish army was landed at Sukhum. But the tribes were ruined and exhausted by twenty-five years of war; at the Paris Conference their interests were ignored; and in 1859 the Lesghian resistance collapsed with the surrender of Shamil. The Cherkess tribes were finally reduced five years later.

The methods of the conquerors were barbarous, efficient and effective. They thinned the Chechnian forest, and transplanted the most warlike inhabitants, giving the best

lands to Cossack settlers. They built a railway from Vladikavkas to Baku round the Daghestan bastion, and bisected the Avar country with a military road. On the west, they were even more thorough and consolidatory. The Cherkesses and Ossets were given the alternatives of transplantation to the most barren parts of the Kuban, or of emigration to Turkey. The bulk of them, half-a-million, chose the latter, and in the next five years were to be seen, destitute, starving, and dying of lowland diseases, in every Black Sea port. A few thousands of the emigrants alone survived to form a brigand element in Macedonia and the Brusa vilayet. The Russians sent Slovak and Cossack settlers to occupy the deserted orchards and gardens along the Circassian coast, but the colonisation was unsuccessful, and, for the most part, the ancient villages of the western mountaineers are now uninhabited.

The spirit of the tribes was broken. When in 1877 a Turkish army advanced from Batum, and the tribes were summoned to rise to a *Jihad*, the feeble movement was easily crushed.

During the next half-century the processes of civilisation continued. The plantation of

tobacco and fruit in the Sukhum province engaged the surviving families of Cherkesses as gardeners. The development of the Grozni and Maikop fields on the north, and of Baku on the south, drew the younger generation of Chechens and Lesghians down from the hills to become workmen. And the Russian Government continued to displace the natives from the best lands, in favour of Slav immigrants, a policy which aroused some feeble little rebellions among the Ossets and Chechens. The temporary collapse of order in 1904-5 permitted a recrudescence of the old brigandages, and bands of mountaineers for a few months wrecked trains and infested the environs of the oil-towns.

After the Young Turkish Revolution of 1908 a number of "Circassian" officers in the Turkish army formed a "Committee of Circassian *Emigrés* in Turkey," and carried on Pan-Islamic propaganda. In effect, however, the Russian conquest was complete, and the Mountaineers were quickly succumbing to that process of Russification which would eventually submerge their individuality as it has that of other primitive races. During the course of the war, the Committee of Union and Progress made tentative efforts

to rouse the spirit of independence among all the Caucasian peoples, and, in 1915, a Committee was formed under its auspices composed of Georgians, Tatars and representatives of the mountaineers, but dominated by two "Circassian" pashas. This Committee visited Berlin, Vienna and Berne.

When the Russian Revolution broke out in 1917, the political leaders of the Mountaineers were both unprepared and unorganised. These politicals were mostly Russianised *bourgeois*—mining engineers, officials and lawyers. They met in March 1917 at Vladikavkas, and after the arrest of the Russian General, Fleycher, formed a Provisional Central Committee to maintain the interests of the Mountaineers as against those of other elements, the Russian workmen, Cossacks and *bourgeois*, on the Executive Committee of the Province of Terek. This Provisional Committee convoked a Pan-Mountaineers' Congress to meet in May at Vladikavkas, and sent four of its chief members to attend the coming Congress of Mussulmans at Baku.

The Pan-Mountaineers' Congress met in due course in the theatre of Vladikavkas, a strange medley, professing to represent all

the tribes of the Northern Caucasus, the nearly extinct Cherkess and Abkhaz, the Kabards and the Balkar and Kara Chai Turks of the Kuban slopes, the Kuruyks, Salatais and Nogais of the Steppe, the Ossets, Chechens and the numerically powerful tribes of Daghestan. A curious Congress it was, such a Congress as is only produced in those first halcyon days which follow a revolution: lawyers, engineers and schoolmasters trying to be tribal chiefs; petroleum royalty-owners mouthing democratic formulæ; and a sprinkling of mullahs to create a theatrical atmosphere of tribal patriarchalism. And as elsewhere in Russia, during those middle months of 1917, a great many resolutions and constitutions and laws were published; and telegrams of congratulation and mutual admiration were sent broadcast to neighbouring Committees, and Unions and Soviets and Associations; and delegates full of hopes and ideals set off on increasingly difficult railway journeys to Pan-Mussulman Congresses, convened at Moscow, and then twice again at Baku. Out of all the welter of speeches and resolutions and declarations in favour of Constituent Assemblies and Federal solutions and Islamic Unions, two very definite trends

of policy may be noted. There were the *bourgeois* elements of Vladikavkas, Grozni and smaller centres, and the few rich oil magnates who favoured close co-operation with the Russian "Right" parties; and there were a few professional agitators, journalists of Baku such as Hassan Aghaiev, the violent Pan-Turanian publicist, together with some of the more fanatical mullahs, who advocated a rising in favour of the Turks, and adhesion to all the loose Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turanian tenets of the C.U.P. The *bourgeois* party, chief of whom were Chermoiev, a millionaire Chechen of Grozni; Bammatov, a lawyer; and Kotzev, an agricultural expert, from the first dominated the situation. In September a second Congress of Mountaineers declared in favour of Federal Union with Russia, and two months later, when the Bolshevik coup took place at Petrograd, Chermoiev and his supporters made haste to come to an understanding with the South-Eastern Union formed at Ekaterinodar by Miliukov, Guchkov, General Alexeiev, and General Kaledin, Hetman of the Don Cossacks. The large financial interests of the Chermoiev group at Grozni required that they should not allow themselves to be isolated from Further Russia,

while, on the other hand, the South-East Union was anxious to have access to the petroleum of Maikop and Grozni. The forces of anarchy, however, were too strong for both parties. During the summer disturbances had occurred between the Cossack settlers and the Cherkesses in the Kuban, the Chechens along the Terek and Sunja. The South-east Union attempted to conciliate Vladikavkas by the cession of certain disputed districts, a measure which only tended to antagonise the Cossacks and to embitter further their relations with the tribes. The Cossacks were reinforced by bands of Bolshevik soldiers deserting from the Turkish front, while the Mountaineers were joined by units of the famous "Savage Division" ¹ returning from Galicia. A series of bloody skirmishes was brought to a crisis by the murder of the Mussulman deputy Karaulov by Cossacks. On December 2nd Chermoiev severed relations with the South-east Union—already threatened with dissolution by the Bolshevik invasion of the Don territory—and proclaimed the autonomy of the "Republic of the Mountaineers." The collapse of the Russian Cadets, the advance

¹ Recruited from Daghestan.

of the Bolsheviks into the Kuban and Terek Provinces, and the successes of the Turks in Transcaucasia, were now all circumstances which combined to approximate the policy of Chermoiev to that of Aghaiev and the Young Turk agitators. In January 1918 the Bolsheviks, supported by the Cossacks, advanced along the railway from Mineralnaia Vody to Beslan and threatened Vladikavkas and Grozni. Chermoiev withdrew his headquarters to Nazran, and later to Temir-Khan-Shura, in Central Daghestan. The Bolsheviks were then compelled to fight Kornilov and Alexeiev in the Northern Kuban, and having secured the railway line and the Cossack settlements, did not press the offensive. Chermoiev now turned for support to the Turks, who had recently occupied Kars, and who were negotiating with the Transcaucasian *Seim* at Trebizond. He went with Bammatov to Tiflis, and demanded assistance to attack the Bolsheviks. The *Seim*, dominated by the Georgian Social Democrats, still adhered to a Russian orientation, and fearing Chermoiev's co-operation with the Turks and the Tatar nationalists at Elizabetopol, refused him support. In the middle of April Chermoiev proceeded to Trebizond, and later to

Batum, where the Turko-Transcaucasian negotiations were being continued. He now passed completely under the influence of the Turks, and appeared to them a useful agent for the furtherance of their schemes for the penetration of the Caucasus. On May 1st the Turkish Government recognised the independence of the Republic of the Mountaineers, and sent Chermoiev and the Daghestan delegation to Constantinople. During the following three months the Turks, with the adherence of the Tatar National Committee of Elizabetopol, were engaged in overrunning the whole of the Eastern Caucasus. In September they occupied Baku, and established the puppet Republic of Azerbaijan. A small Russian force, under the Osset Colonel Bicherakhov, retiring before them, came into conflict with Chermoiev's levies near Petrovsk, but the active young Turkish General, Nuri, following fast on his heels, occupied Derbend, and—a few days after the Armistice—Petrovsk.

The Armistice and the consequent Turkish withdrawal, the British occupation of Baku, and the successes of General Denikin in the Northern Caucasus, failed to check the activities of the Daghestan separatists. The

departure of Chermoiev and the *bourgeois* leaders to press the claims of the Mountaineers at the Paris Conference, tended yet more to place the control of policy in the hands of the fanatical mullahs, the Tatar agitators, and the many Turkish officers who had taken refuge in the hospitable mountain villages. The "Republic of the Mountaineers" indeed had collapsed. The Cherkesses and the small Turkish tribes in the west had fallen away; the Ossets favoured the Russians—those in Georgia indeed had risen in their favour during the previous summer; and the Georgians had occupied the rich district of Zakatali. The Daghestanli and the Chechens nevertheless were still formidable, and Denikin could not spare the troops to subdue them.

When, in the summer of 1919, Denikin's commitments in Central Russia increased, and he withdrew troops from the Kuban, a dangerous movement broke out along the west coast of the Caspian. The Bolsheviks from Astrakhan occupied Petrovsk and Derbend, while a force of about 30,000 Mussulmans, including a thousand Turkish *asaker* and hundreds of Turkish and Tatar officers, threatened Vladikavkas and Grozni. Denikin was compelled to withdraw two divisions of

Cossacks and a quantity of armoured cars and aeroplanes from the Bolshevik front, and to occupy several weeks in the recapture of Petrovsk and Derbend. He pressed his advance to Temir-Khan-Shura, and, for the moment, the Daghestanli Khans submitted.

In the spring of 1920, when the Denikin Government collapsed, the Bolsheviks occupied Vladikavkas and Grozni, and later Baku. The Bolsheviks did not, however, penetrate the difficult mountains of Daghestan, but contented themselves with securing the line of communication with the Transcaucasus.

In the autumn of 1920 the Mountaineers again became active, under the leadership of a certain Hajji Usun, in guerrilla operations against the Bolsheviks, and since that date they have spasmodically renewed their raids. The relations between Russia and the Mountaineers have, in fact, resumed the state which existed until the 'fifties of last century, when, each autumn, the tribesmen habitually raided the Cossack settlements on the north and the villages of lowland Georgia on the south-east.

The occupation of Georgia by the Bolsheviks in the spring of 1921 tended still further to increase Russian difficulties in the mountains.

The mountainous districts of Svanetia and Abkhazia, comprising the upper valleys of the Ingur and the Kodor, afforded a refuge to large numbers of Georgian officers and other refugees. These Georgians, under the leadership of a young Kakhetian landowner, Chelakaiev, successfully repulsed a Bolshevik incursion into Svanetia during 1923. The recent insurrection in Georgia, which centred in the western lowland provinces of Mingrelia and Imeretia, was undertaken mainly on the initiative of the Georgian Social Democratic Party, with whom, according to reliable information, Chelakaiev is not in intimate relations. Its failure has had, however, the effect of considerably recruiting his forces, which have recently been active again in Svanetia, and in the eastern Georgian province of Kakhetia. The failure has had the further effect that it has reduced the influence of the Socialist exile-leaders—who do not appear to be competent insurrectionists—while the flight or execution of so many of the orthodox political leaders may serve to place the leadership of the Georgian national movement into the hands of soldiers who prefer to lead the life of outlaws rather than to abandon their native soil.

The immediate future is difficult to foresee. The Muhammadan mountain tribes have not the favourable geographical position which enabled the Afghans to establish their independence, nor are they fortunate, like the Albanians, in that equivocal political situation which makes their independence secure in the rivalries of their neighbours. The Bolsheviks might subdue Daghestan by a short and vigorous campaign. But so long as the tribes maintain even an insurrectionary independence they will remain a danger to the double line of Russian communication with Transcaucasia. Further, they will constitute an element susceptible to Islamic propaganda and ready to participate in the schemes of such Turkish adventurers as the lately deceased Enver. At the same time, the very action of suppressing the tribes could only serve to demonstrate the essentially antagonistic attitude of Moscow towards the nationalist aspirations of Mussulman peoples, and to expose the fundamental falsity of their professions of sympathy for the "oppressed races" of Islam.

July 1924.

THE MAN IN THE PANTHER'S SKIN

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IN the twelfth century, the Christian nations of the Middle East were enjoying the interval which supervened between the attacks of the Seljuk Turks and the great invasions of the Mongols. The period is regarded by the Georgians as the Golden Age of their country, and legend has idealised as the representative of the brief glories of the Georgian race, the figure of Queen Tamara—

"The mild, the pleasing, the sweetly-speaking, the kindly smiling,
The sun-like shining one, the majestic, the gently-moving, like a full river."

IN the reign of Tamara the Georgians attained the height of their military power. The Byzantine Emperor, a fugitive in Trebi-

zond, sought her alliance; the mountain tribes of the main range and the Mussulman emirs of the Eastern Caucasus recognised her suzerainty; her generals pressed hard on the Seljuk Sultan of Rum, and pushed their cavalry raids far into Persia.

In this brief heyday of their history the versatile genius of the Georgians flowered into a delicate culture which, in thought and manners, in architecture and literature, was a casual and erratic blending of foreign influences, Byzantine, Arabian and Persian.

The Georgian princes proved their devotion, expiated their sins or raised monuments to their wealth and taste by the foundation of cathedrals, churches and castles, in the design of which the technique and skill of Greek and Armenian architects and masons are frequently to be observed. The mural paintings of Sion, Ghelathi and Bethani show the members of the royal house of Bagratiani in all the panoply of Byzantine majesty—coronets and sceptres, long purple tunics, jewelled belts and red leather boots; and we know that the Georgian youth went to imbibe the wisdom of the West at Byzantium and in the Georgian monasteries at Mount Athos and Jerusalem, returning to endow their country with learned manuscript

translations of ancient and contemporary Greek writers. But if the Georgians looked to the West for the essentials of culture and fashion, if they combined Byzantine free thought with a political fanaticism directed against the Muslim, they acquired from the East many of those customs and traits of thought which characterised mediæval Persia. It is a remarkable illustration of the catholicity of taste and liberality of outlook of the Georgians that, in the most urgent years of their national wars against the Muslim, the masterpiece of their literature should be this "Persian tale done into Georgian," "The Man in the Panther's Skin," in which the principal figures are followers of Muhammad, and in which the philosophies of Islam and of Christianity are inextricably intermingled.

This heyday of the Georgians saw the rise of a class of poets and bards very similar to the troubadours of contemporary Europe. They apparently wandered from castle to castle, reciting and singing fantastic romances and lyrical accounts of victories over the Muslim, of single combats and of celebrated huntsmen, at the great feasts and drinking bouts. Their favourite songs or parts of them were acquired by heart by their audiences, and repeated

from generation to generation; their more famous pieces were recorded in manuscript, copies of a few of which have been preserved in noble libraries. The most renowned of these mediæval romancers were Shaveli, whose odes have been translated into Russian; Shahrukhzade, Khoneli and Tmokveli, most of whose works have been lost; and Rusthaveli, the author of "The Man in the Panther's Skin." Of Rusthaveli we know little. Imaginative portraits show him with the long, well-groomed hair and pointed beard of the fashionable courtier, the dark colouring and slight, slim figure typical of his race, the large eyes and full lips of the man of sentiment. Popular tradition and his own lines attribute to him a hopeless passion for his beautiful queen, and his work certainly gives token of a character wayward and erotic. His life, however, from the sparse details which we have, appears to have run a course of pleasant prosperity. Shota Rusthaveli was born towards the latter part of the twelfth century—probably in the reign of Tamara's father—at Rusthavi, a village near Akhaltsikh. He was brought up under the care of his uncle, a monk, and received an ample education in the monasteries of Tbeti, Gremi and Ikhaltho,

and afterwards in the Georgian monasteries in Greece and Palestine. As a reward for the composition of odes in honour of Queen Tamara, he received a position at Court, and later his native district in fief, in enjoyment of the comfortable increments of which we may assume that he produced his masterpiece.

The tale of "The Man in the Panther's Skin" is highly fantastic; the plot is typical of mediæval romances; and the work is attractive in its philosophy and in its description rather than in its incidents. As a human document it is unique. It is the interpretation of the soul of the Mediæval Georgian, of his cosmopolitan free-thinking mind, of his easy, rather idealistic sensualism, of his aggressive though gallant individualism. Throughout the poem is manifest his pure joy of life, the joy of seeing and touching and hearing, his love of the chase, of strife, of jewels and of flowers. We can see as vividly as though he rode past us on his "jet-black" charger, girt in "Khvarasmian armour," the mediæval Georgian knight, a courageous slayer of foes and of beasts, a respecter of the aged, a patron of the poor, chivalrous to women, a loyal friend and a great drinker, but withal, callous, passionate and cruel, ingenu-

ously treacherous. Here is a primitive man, with a gay fatalism, a light-hearted wisdom, a smattering of Greek learning, with a craving to assert his virility in combat and to sate his passions amidst beauty and barbaric luxury. Through the mouth of the paladin Avthandil, Rusthaveli gives us a disquisition upon the nature of a brave man :—

“ A brave man must be of good cheer, he must not mope in grief. . . . I am such an one as will not gather cucumbers in this world as an old man. . . .

“ . . . A wise man cannot abandon his beloved friend. I venture to remind thee of a certain discourse made by Plato : ‘ Falsehood and two-facedness injure the body and then the soul.’

“ . . . Thou hast read how the apostles write of love, how they speak of it, how they praise it; know thou it and harmonise thy knowledge : ‘ love exalteth us,’ this is as it were the tinkling burden of their song; if thou conceive not this, how can I convince ignorant men? . . . Sadness avails thee not nor useless flow of tears. . . . It is a law with men that they should struggle and suffer woes, and no creature of flesh hath power to thwart providence. . . .

“ Mindfulness of a friend ne’er doeth us harm. I despise the man who is shameless, false and treacherous. I cannot be false; I cannot do it for a mighty King. What is

worse than a hesitant, tardy-going man? What is worse than a man in the fight with a frowning face, shirking, affrighted, and thinking of death? In what is a cowardly man better than a woman weaving a web? It is better to get honour than all goods! . . .

"If thou art wise, all the sages agree with this principle: A man must be manly, it is better that he should weep as seldom as possible; in grief one should strengthen himself like a stone wall. Through his own reason a man falls into trouble. . . .

"Who hath not been a lover, whom hath the furnace not consumed? Who hath not seen pains, who faints not for somebody? Tell me, what has been unexampled? Why should thy spirits flee? Knowest thou not that none e'er plucked a thornless rose?

"They asked the rose: 'Who made thee so lovely in form and face? I marvel why thou are thorny, why finding thee is pain!' It said—'Thou findest the sweet with the bitter; whatever costs dear is better; when the lovely is cheapened it is no longer worth even dried fruit.' . . .

"Who else is a man save he that will endure what is grievous? How can one let himself be bent by grief? What subject of conversation is this? Fear not, God is generous, though the world be hard! Learn then what I teach thee; I make bold to tell thee that he who will not learn is an ass."

On the love of man for woman Rusthaveli discourses in his preface:—

"Love is tender, a thing hard to be known. True love is something apart from lust, and cannot be likened thereto; it is one thing; lust is quite another thing, and between them lies a broad boundary; in no way do they mingle—hear my saying! The lover must be constant, not lewd, impure and faithless. . . . I hate heartless love—embracing, kissing, noisy bussing.

"Lovers, call not this thing love; when any longs for one to-day and another to-morrow, lightly bearing parting's pain. Such base sport is like mere boyish trifling; the good lover is he who suffers a world's woe."

But later, when Avthandil, the faithful lover, is forced by circumstances into a squalid intrigue with a sprightly dame, the hero laments that—

"Better for him who can bear it, is aloofness from woman; she plays with thee and pleases thee, she wins thee over and trusts thee; but in a trice she betrays thee, she cuts wherever she pierces; so a secret should never be told to a woman."

And on this passing love he meditates :—

"Every unfitting deed is brief, and then it is fruitless."

With all the fantastic descriptions and wild deeds of his book, Rusthaveli interposes here and there some touch which indicates a careful

observation of humanity, some trite sayings of a kindly courtier of the world. His delineations of character are masterful. The enraged king, who, "as if he poured flame from his face," threw furniture at his vizier, and the vizier who, when he was summoned, "his colour paled and he was careful," after the manner of Agag, and who later "crept off crestfallen like a fox," and "went away in black luck," are the familiar figures of Oriental romances.

And in the engaging lady, Phatman Khatun, Rusthaveli creates a woman of all centuries:—

"Dame Phatman was attractive to the eye, not young but brisk, of a good figure, dark in complexion, plump-faced, not wizened, a lover of minstrels and singers, a wine-drinker; she had abundance of elegant gowns and head-dresses. . . ."

Few of Rusthaveli's thoughts bear separation from their text, but there are some which may be quoted almost in the form of proverbs:—

"When a man has waited for a man, the coming pleases him wondrously . . . great comfort it is to speak of troubles when a man has the opportunity."

"This true saying is written on a stone in China: 'Who seeks not a friend is his own foe.'"

"Even in the book it is written, 'Of all the most hateful is the friend-foe; if a man be wise he will not heartily confide.'"

"No one knows mine affairs like myself; what embitters me, what sweetens me. The discourse of idle men greatly grieves a man."

"Timidity slurs a man, and wantonness a woman."

"Spite is a net of woes."

"Since the sun shines alike on roses and middens, be not thou weary of mercy to great and small."

"Munificence in kings is like the aloe planted in Eden. All, even the traitor, are obedient to the generous."

"Who else would have related this? It is the choice of a foolish man to learn before anybody else what is evil."

"What is of equal value with life to a man? . . . Life is better than loot; this I even now learn."

"A bribe settles matters even in hell."

"See what gold does, that crook from a devilish root. Gold never gives joy to them that love it; till the day of death greed makes them gnash their teeth. Gold comes in and goes out, they murmur at the course of the planet when it is lacking; moreover it binds the soul here in this world, and hinders it from soaring up."

All Rusthaveli's descriptions, of hunting and feasting and fighting, of travel, cities and animals, are full of originality and colour, of that joy in the grace and romance of ordinary

life which is the greatest charm of the Georgian character.

Rusthaveli describes a hunt in which King Rostevan had made a wager with Avthandil as to their respective prowess in the chase :—

“ They fixed the wager and laid down this condition : Whoever shall be beaten, let him go bareheaded for three days. . . .

“ Herds of game, innumerable, flocked in ; stags, goats, wild-asses, high-leaping chamois. Lord and vassal pursued them ; what sight could be fairer ? Behold the bow, the arrow, and the untiring arm ! ”

Eventually it was agreed that Avthandil had won the wager, but—

“ the King heard this with as little concern as if it had been the result of a game of backgammon. . . . And there they both sat to cool themselves at the foot of the trees ; the soldiers assembled and stood round them, countless as chaff. . . . As they sported they gazed at the stream and the edge of the glen.”

Rusthaveli recounts how Tariel, who is “ The Man in the Panther’s Skin,” the friend and brother-in-arms of Avthandil, heard news of his lost love :—

“ One day the King and I went forth to the chase ; we climbed upon a cape, jutting out into the sea. Phridon said to me, ‘ I will tell

thee how, when we were out riding for sport, I once saw a wonderful thing from this cape.' I bade him speak, and Phridon told me even this tale: 'One day I wished to hunt. I mounted this steed of mine. It seemed as if there were a duck in the sea, a falcon on the land; I stood here and watched the flight of the hawk thitherward. Now and then, as I climbed uphill, I gazed out to sea. I perceived a small thing far away on the sea. . . . I could not make it out. . . . It was a boat tinted over with many folded stuff; a steersman guided it. I fixed mine eyes upon it, and there in a litter sat the moon; I would have given her the seventh heaven as habitation. Two slaves as black as pitch crept out. They put ashore a maiden, I saw her thick-tressed hair. . . . Joy made me hasten, quiver, stagger. I loved that rose who appeared torn to mine eyes. I resolved to engage them; I said, "Let me go towards them." . . . I pressed my horse with my heel. There was a noise and rustling among the rushes. I could not reach her, however much I used the spur; they were gone.'"

Of the marvellous city of Gulansharo, Rust-haveli says:—

"They saw a city engirt by a thicket of garden, with wondrous kinds of flowers of many and many a hue. In what way canst thou understand the loveliness of that land?

"With three ropes they moored the ship to the shore of those gardens. . . . Thither

came the gardener of him at whose garden they had landed. . . . Avthandil hailed him. . . . 'Whose man are ye, who are ye?' . . . He said . . . 'This is the city of Gulansharo (the city of flowers), full of much loveliness. Hither everything fair cometh by ships sailing from sea to sea. . . . Even if he be old a man is rejuvenated by coming hither; drinking, rejoicing, tilting and songs are unceasing; summer and winter alike we have many-hued flowers; whoever knoweth us, envieth us, even they who are our foes. Great merchants can find nought more profitable than this; they buy, they sell, they gain, they lose; a poor man will be enriched in a month; from all quarters they gather merchandise; the penniless by the end of the year have money laid by.'"

But in his description of fighting Rusthaveli, in words reminiscent of the Old Testament both in language and sentiment, shows the primitive Georgian man, when he threw off the light cloak of chivalry. Tariel is recounting a fight to Avthandil:—

"We crossed the sea, we landed. Mounted they threw themselves on us. Again we engaged; then began the vicissitudes of battle. Phridon's bravery and agility pleased me then; in warfare a lion, in face a sun, that aloe-tree fought. With his sword he cast down both his cousins, he cut their hands clean off; thus he crippled them; he led them

away bound by the arms; the one did not abandon the two. He made their knights to weep, his knights to vaunt themselves. Their soldiers fled from us, we threw ourselves upon them, we scattered them; swiftly we seized the city, we wasted no time; we broke their legs with stones, we tanned their skin into leather. Kill me if it was possible to empty the treasures both by lading and stowing.

"Phridon inspected the treasures and put his seals upon them; he himself led away his two vanquished cousins; he shed their blood in exchange for his, and poured it out on the fields."

Again we see these Georgian knights, at one of the drinking bouts, on the subject of which, two hundred years later, the Venetian traveller, Josaphat Barbaro, expressed his very candid disgust :—

"They sat, they banqueted, they multiplied the best liquor; they entertained Avthandil as kinsman treats kinsman, they brought beautiful vessels, all quite new. . . . That day they drank, they ate, there was a banquet for the tribe of drinkers. Day dawned. . . ."

And even in twelfth-century Georgia, there appears a type which is particularly in evidence in modern society. Says Phatman Khatun of her husband :—

"Now behold the tipsy merchant, how hasty,

rash and ill-bred he is ! Truly it is said, ' A rose befits not a crow, nor do horns suit an ass.' ”

It is in speaking of his own art, in opening to us the door of his own mind, that Rust-haveli has left the most beautiful lines he wrote, has expressed the most witty and trenchant of his thoughts :—

“ This Persian tale, now done into Georgian, has hitherto been like a pearl of great price cast in play from hand to hand ; now I have found it and mounted it in a setting of verse ; I have done a praiseworthy deed. . . . Min-strely is, first of all, a branch of wisdom ; divinely intelligible to the godlike, very wholesome to them that hearken ; it is pleasant too if the listener be a worthy man ; in a few words he utters a long discourse ; herein lies the excellence of poetry.

“ Like a horse running a great race on a long course, like a ball-player in the lists striking the ball fairly, and aiming adroitly at the mark, even so it is with the poet who indites long poems, when utterance is hard for him and verse fails. Then indeed behold the poet and his poesy will be manifest. When he is at a loss for Georgian words, and verse begins to fail, he will not weaken Georgian nor will he let it grow poor in words. Let him strike the ball cunningly and he will make his goal.

“ He who utters somewhere one or two verses cannot be called a poet ; let him not think himself equal to great singers. Even if they compose a few discrepant verses from

time to time, yet if they say ' Mine are the best ! ' they are stiff-necked mules."

Rusthaveli died, according to legend, in the same year as Thamara; with her passed the form, with him much of the spirit of the Great Age of Georgia. But through all the dreary centuries of the Mussulman and Mongol wars, and through the years of foreign rule, his poem has survived as the expression of the national philosophy of the Georgian.

In the concluding quatrains of his epic, Rusthaveli voices the gay, sad fatalism that was in him, and seems, mournfully prophetic, to foresee the dismal future of his race :—

" Their tale is ended like a dream of the night. They are passed away, gone beyond the world. Behold the treachery of time; to him who thinks it long, even for him it is of a moment. . . . Old-time customs and deeds, praises of those kings, have I found and done into verse. Thus have we chattered.

" This is such a world as is not to be trusted by any ; it is a moment to the eyes of men, and only long enough for the blinking of the eyelashes. What seek you, what do you? Fate is an insulter. . . . I, a certain Meskhian bard of the borough of Rusthavi, I write this."

